

NEW
Observations
UPON THE
DECALOGUE:
OR
The Second of the Four Parts
OF
Christian Doctrine,
Preached upon the
CATECHISM.

By JOHN DESPAGNE Minister
of the Gospel.



LONDON.

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To the RIGHT HONORABLE
and

THRICE-ILLUSTRIOUS

PHILIP

Earl of PEMBROKE and MONT-
GOMERY, Baron of SHURLAND, Lord
of CARDIFFE, PARR, ROS and KEN-
DAL, MARMYON and S. QUINTIN;
Knight of the order of the GARTER,
and Chancellor of the University of
OXFORD.

My LORD,



*Present you here with a
handful of fruits ga-
thered out of your own
Field, which I humbly desire
may be acceptable to you, as I am
accountable to you; so I will en-
deavour continually to please
God and your self: this auditory*

A 3

among

Epistle Dedicatory.

among whom you have been pleased to give me a place, and whether so many noble persons do resort, shall be an everlasting monument of your Charitable pity. My Lord, our souls bless you, and our bowels which are refreshed with the shadow of your name, shall carry the acknowledgment thereof up to Heaven. In these dayes full of horror and confusion, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of God hath not, in regard of us, where he may rest his head, if you had not lodged him amongst us: even so may you lodge with him in his highest habitation. But my Lord live here first many ages, and in the end live eternally.

To



To the READER.

Reader ;

IN the Preface of my Observations on the Creed, I have prevented the most of those accusations which might be made against that Treatise, or these that follow : I could overwhelm them with reasons, who yet demand, for what serv these things that I have uttered, to salvation? Now concerning Orthodoxal points, in which you may see so many Looking-glasses of Gods wisdom ; points I say cleared by innumerable celestial lights ; conduce they no-

To the Reader.

thing to salvation : but these people who speak so Magisterially, imagine that nothing conduceth to salvation, but what they find in their cōmon places: and as all their learning consisteth in that vulgar kind of study, so they think all Divinity is locked up within such bounds.

I need not answer those who complain, that all here is of too high a taste, and that I give them nothing but salt or spices; but it is free for them to take hereof as much as will season the ordinary food of their mindes : and yet the acrimony which they find there, proceeds from their tenderness, but in accustoming themselves, they will

To the Reader.

will finde there the relish, salubrity and nutritive vertue of Manna.

Many for want of the knowledg of the very principle, meet with many rubs and stumbling stones in the plainest ways that may be : if I should say that *Enock* is the third of those who went out of the world ; none having gone before but *Abel* and *Adam*, this were imperceptible to those who cannot consider the 5 chapter of *Genesis* ; but I do not undertake to teach the rudiments I presuppose, them, and I beleeve I speak to those who understand them.

There be some who wish I had been somewhat more large
in

To the Reader.

in these observations, but these men complain that they are conducted the shorter way ; I could furnish them with words enough, but is not this for their advantage, that they have in few words the whole substance of a Subject within this brevity, which I have expressly studied for, they shall find still stuff of a large breadth, if they will unfold it from one end to the other.

I have the approbation of divers men eminent for learning, even of some to whom I am otherways unknown ; one of these under the name of the Genius of *Cambridge*, having seen the English translation

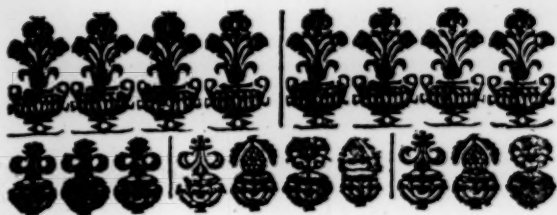
on

To the Reader.

on of my Observations on the Creed honored me with an excellent Latin Epistle, encouraging me to publish these other tractats, which I promised. I know well that the Elogies which he gave me are too high to belong to me, but doubtless in exalting me, he would afford me matter of humiliation. Whosoever thou art, if ever these lines shall come into thy hands, and if thou wilt be pleased to cast thine eyes upon them; I beseech thee by these many brave vertues, the sparkles whereof I finde shining in thy letters, and by that sympathy & communion of thoughts which God hath put in us; do
not

To the Reader.

not conceal thy name from me,
it shall be precious, and precious
also shall thy counsels be
to me. *O quis daret te ut fratrem
mihi !*



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THE



THE NATURAL MAN, and HIS QUALITIES.

Divers sorts of good men in the World's opinion, and but onely one indeed.



Any men are honest, Either for fear of men, aw'd by the severitie of the laws; Or for the good that may come to them of it: as hee that is right and square that he may keep his dealings afoot: Or for reputation; as it may fall out, that the onely desire of glory may carry a man to give all he has to the poor; yea, to expose his body to the flames, 1 Cor. 13. 3. Or for the
B appre-

apprehension of hell ; For many would be out of measure wicked, **w e e it not that this fear holds them in** Or for the joyes of heaven ; as **he that asked of our Saviour, what he should do to have eternal life.** Or to satisfie their own conscience, that presseth and solliciteth them to some vertuous action. Or out of a meer desire they have to vertue it self ; as there are generous dispositions, that seem to go with no other spring.

Now in very deed, of all these sorts of good men, there is none that is truly so. This assertion generally taken, may seem to be very unjust : For one will haply grant, that hee who is not godly but out of fear, or some interest hee pretends either in this world or that to come, hath no reall goodnesse, but that hee hath a servile or mercenary soul. But you'll think it strange, to say that he that works not but out of conscience, and the sole love he hath to vertue, should not be a good man ! for what is it

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to be an honest man, if this be not ?
and what is further needfull to have
this quality ?

It seems true, that our actions cannot have a nobler principle then this, *viz.* to satisfie conscience, and to love Vertue for its own sake : Yet this is not enough to be a right honest man. Wee must then presuppose, that to speak properly, and according to the language of God, There is no good work, but that which is done in consideration, and out of love of the soveraign Good, which is God himself. For is it beleevable, that God may approve of a work in which himself is no way considered ? Or that hee may take him for good that neglecteth, or is ignorant of the chief Goodness, and hath no affection to it ? This granted, it is evident why the onely love of Conscience, or of Vertue, makes not an honest man ; for neither Conscience nor Vertue are God: they are amiable by reason of him that is the highest Goodnesse ; but

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whoſoever loveth them without him,
knoweth not ſo much as what good
is: Such was the goodneſſe of many
the Pagans, and even ſuch is the good-
neſſe of many now adays.

*Wherefore God was pleaſ'd that the Heathen
ſhould outgo the Saints in many ver-
tuous actions.*

It is certain that in the Heathen
Hitories we have more examples of
Heroick Vertues then what are read
in the Bible it ſelf. Let's mention
but ſome of them. Wee praiſe the
continencie of *Joſeph*: but that of
Alexander and *Scipio* came not ſhort of
it. We talk of the Midwives which
refuſed to obey Pharaohs command,
by which they were enjoyned to ſtri-
fle the Hebrew male-children as ſoon
as born: but among infidels there
have been ſlaves that rather choſe to
be wrack'd in pieces, then to let fall
word that might have prejudiced their
Maſters. We commend the faithful
amity

amity that was between *David* and *Jonathan*: But how many examples of Pagans, that would have died for their friends? Wee have in esteem the zeal of *Phineas*, that punished the Adultery of the Israelite with the Madianitish woman; but is this act comparable to the justice of that Prince, who had rather that one of his own eyes should be put out, and another of his own son that had committed that Adultery, then to baffle the Law that ordained to put out both the eyes of him that should be found guilty of that filth. We extoll the generosity of *Moses*, who refused to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, and gave over the sway he bore in the Court of *Egypt*: but how many Monarchs have voluntarily laid aside their Diadems, and renounc'd the majestie of the Scepter, to reduce themselves to the obscurity of a private life? We celebrate the abstinence of *David*, who refused to drink the water that some of his va-

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liant Worthies had fetch'd him with danger of their lives, 2 *Sam.* 23. But divers Generals of Armies mortally wounded, would not have the bloud of their wounds stanch'd, nor permit the drawing out of the dart wherewith they were clean shot through, before in the first place they had taken order for the safety of their Souldiers. Wee further commend *David*, who (beholding that the plague wherewith the people were smitten was occasioned through him) offered himself to punishment, that hee might deliver his Common-wealth: But some Pagans have made away themselves, rather then they would be engaged to fight against their Country, that had unjustly banished and confiscated them. We proclaim the kindnesse of *Ioseph*, that was the nourisher of his Father: but they speak of such a Son, who to save his Father, cast himself into the midst of the fire. We admire divers other examples of Vertue which are famous

mous in the Scripture; but the Heathen have shewed actions far beyond.

Yet hath there always been more goodness and more vertue (without comparifon) in the Saints then in Infidels. Divers of the Pagans actions have been greater, verily, and more vigorous; but they were not enlivened from the true principle of vertue, which is faith in God, and had not his glory for their aim: So many creatures surpasse man in divers acts of foresight, naturall affection, courage, temperance, fidelity, gratitude, and yet they have but the resemblances of Vertues; neither can one say that there is in them any morall goodnesse.

But see here our question: Whatever vertuous actions the heathen have performed, proceeded from God himself, which gave them the inclinations to them. Now wherefore did he enable them to do such notable actions, and yet accepted not their persons?

sons ? for it is impossible to please him without faith, *Hebr.* 11.6. And why would he that even their works (in the sense I have named) should outstrip those of the Saints ? Hee would verily teach us, that works, even the very best, have not merit enough to bring us neer to him : For if many that have been transcendent in divers vertuous acts, notwithstanding have not obtained grace ; And on the contrary, many that have been inferior in works, are counted amongst the friends of God ; followeth it not, that if we be pleasing unto him, it is not because of our works ?

A consideration upon the two last sinners immediately converted by Christ, viz. the Thief and S. Paul.

One was converted by our Saviour on the Crosse ; the other by him in heaven : one entred Paradise the same day that Christ entred, being dead : The other was rap'd up
thicker

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thither before ever he died. One repented not but at the last hour of his life, amidst his very punishment; the other found not his heart till he was cast down with affrightment, by voyces and vision from heaven. One and the other (*viz.* the thief and *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*) were (especially this last) far enough from having any inclination to Christ, then when his grace surprised them. Many suppose in a carnall a man power whereby he contributes to his own conversion. but *Sauls* example witnesseth the contrary; he was in the very heat of his madness, when he was called from above; was he in a posture to turn himself to Christ, then when he went against Christ?

Whence comes it to passe, that all men naturally beleve that they must be justified by Works?

It is sufficiently known, that this opinion is natural to every man. All
OF

of us harbour this prejudice within us. Thence it comes to passe, that all Religions except the Christian, generally teach it; the Pagan, the Mahumetan, the Jew, yea, and many that professe Christianity, agree all in this point, and sing all the same song. But how comes this to be false and abusive, seeing it is dictated by Nature it self? We must remember, that by the law of the Creation, it is ordained that man should be justified by his works, and that by them he should live for ever. This principle was ingraved in the minde of man, who verily had had righteousness and life by his works, had he stood in his primitive innocencie; but his fall hath bruised his bones, making him incapable of accomplishing this condition. But he yet retains this ancient principle which hath been left him, to the end he should remember whence he is fallen; not to make him beleeve that he can do that now, which he could in the state of innocencie.

Touching

Touching the pretended merit of WORKS.

*That the Causes of our salvation are in
heaven, the Marks of it on earth.*

IN the search of these two points,
we must take two contrary ways.
For the Book of life wherein we are
enrolled to salvation, and the mercy
of God which calls us to it, and his
grace that dispenseth it, and the
Saviour that hath purchased it, must
be sought in heaven. On the other
side; as we have on earth the instru-
ments of salvation, viz. the Gospel,
the Sacraments, Faith; so likewise
the same faith, the testimony of the
holy Ghost, the peace of our consci-
ences, and our works themselves are
here on earth the marks of our salva-
tion. Divers overturn this method;
suppo-

supposing to be saved by vertue of their works : and on the other side, teaching that none can be saved if he be not one of Gods closet : In the one, they place on earth the Causes of our salvation ; in the other, they seek the Marks of it in heaven ; and in both the two they are as wide of the mark, as heaven is from earth.

Wherefore is it that our Lord, speaking of works according to which he will judge men at the last day, mentioneth none but works of mercy ? Matth. 25. 35.

This passage presents unto us the sentence that shall be given upon men at that great day : where it speaks of nothing save feeding those that hungered, receiving strangers, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison : And on the contrary, of not having performed such deeds of benevolence. But are there no works but these worthy to be remembred before Christs Tribunall, and that are able

to declare us just? or are there no other sins except the omission of such duties? no other crime that deserves damnation? Yes, there are works that excell these: he that spends his blood and life for Christs sake, doth a deed far surpassing him that gives clothes and food to the poor; to be a prisoner for the Gospel, is more then to visit prisoners. How is it then that this sentence expresseth naught save the works of mercy, although that there be many other kindes of works?

Let us consider, That at the day of judgement all will certainly crave mercy. When all the kindreds of the earth shall lament before this Sovereign Judge, what shall we hear men call for but mercy? As then all men will crave that mercy may be shew'd them, God will judge them according to the mercy they have shown or neglected: Judgment that the wicked themselves shall be forced to approve; For it is just that he should be denied

denyed mercy that would use no mercy, *James 2.13.* Saint *Paul* reckoning up the charitable offices *Onesiphorus* had done him in prison, wisheth that he may finde mercy in that day, *2 Tim. 1.* that is to say, he hath shewed mercy toward me, the Lord shew it to him : whereupon it is to be observed, against the opinion of merit, that even our mercy hath need of mercy.

Why God hath chosen Faith rather then any other Vertue to be the instrument of our Justification : The difference between a miraculous Faith and a justifying.

There is no Vertue whereof man taketh not occasion to vant himself, except Faith : Man oftentimes boasteth of his Charity, Patience, Justice, yea, which is ridiculous, many wax proud of their Humility. But as touching justifying Faith, none can brag of that : Why ? This Faith hath for
its

its object the mercy of God, which presupposeth mans misery ; and his misery lies in that hee is culpable ; whereof it is impossible that he should ever vant himself : On the contrary, this Faith overthrows the pride of man.

There is indeed a sort of Faith, from which men oftentimes have drawn matter of ostentation ; that is the faith of Miracles, as they call it. Divers have turn'd the gift of tongues to vanity ; as likewise the other miraculous effects which God wrought by their hands, as is evident by the Apostles discourse, *1 Cor. 13. 14.* We must mark here, That the faith of miracles hath for its formall object, the power of God, which sometimes imployes man to be either the subject or instrument of his Marvels. Now it may easily come to passe, that man may abuse this honour : But he cannot deal so by justifying Faith, whose object is Gods mercy, which excludes all mans vanting, *Rom. 3. 26.*

These

Those that now adayes seek to be justified by works, are more inexcusable then those that had this pretence before the death of Christ.

Although the doctrine that maintains that a sinner is justified by his works, hath ever been vain and abusive; yet is it become more odious since the blood of Christ (on which our justification is grounded) was shed for our sins. For as long as yet there was no payment made for the sin of men, it was not so strange that many endeavored to give satisfaction therein, every man for himself: But after that Christ hath made actuall satisfaction therein, we cannot undertake to pay without accusing him of insufficiency, and charge our selves with an ingratitude more hainous then that of the old Pharisisme.

Good

Good W O R K S the Effects of F A I T H.

The strange reasons by which the Scripture inviteth us to good works, with the method that it teacheth to make us capable of graces.

THe Vulgar think they are in the right, whenas in stead of mysteries of Faith, they cry out, that Ministers ought to speak to the conscience, preach good works, and controll vice. These people by prejudice, that proceeds from common ignorance, make void the first and chiefest part of Christianity, and maintain many capitall errours. An errour to imagine, that good life consists not but in works; as if to well living were not requisite right beleiving. An errour, to say, that the hearing the my-

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steri-

sterious points of Religion which are meerly speculative, is of no force at all to make a man better. So much say the Jews, when they speak of the Gospel ; for they demand to what purpose 'tis to be a good man to know that Jesus Christ hath suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, that he was crucified, dead and buried ? An error to think that the conscience hath not need of matters that are directed onely to the understanding, as well as of those that onely concern the affections : as if a man should not have need of his eyes as well as his hands. An error, to believe that Vertues must be taught onely by their proper descriptions and expresse precepts, after the fashion of Moralists ; for that is to plant the tree by tops of the boughs, in stead of planting it by the root.

Let us hence consider the motives which God himself maketh use of, when he preacheth us good works. The Scripture inviteth us to the practice of Vertues, and hate of sins ;
For as

Forasmuch (saith it) as ye have been baptized into the death of Christ, and buried with him : forasmuch as hee that is our passover is offered up : forasmuch as Christ is raised ; forasmuch as death hath no more dominion over him, &c. *1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. Rom. 6. 4.* What kind of arguments are these to induce us to good works ? he invites us to them by the Articles of our faith, by matters very wide from the subject. There is more yet : For he summoneth us to the doing them by reasons which even seem to perswade the clean contrary. Is this a reason that may put a man in fear to turn him from sin, when one tels him that he is not under the law but under grace, and that God hath ordained to save him ? *Rom. 6. 14. 1 Thess. 5. 8, 9.* This believing, seems it not more fit (as some fallily have thought) to bring in Libertinisme then the fear of sin ?

But we must consider that which is seen even in Nature it self, the root and the fruit for the most part are

not alike, neither in shape, colour nor taste; yea, many times the fruit comes of a root altogether contrary in quality. Let Ignorance judge of it as it will, let the mysteries by which Faith is planted and watered seem to them unprofitable. This Faith is the root of graces; through it our works are purified, and without it it is impossible to bring forth good fruit.

*Why the common people love rather to hear
speak of Charity then Faith; of the
Law then the Gospel.*

It is well enough known, that the common people are more satisfied with an Exhortation, or a Discourse upon Alms, or brotherly friendship, or Temperance, or some other Morality, then with any rare observation on a Point of the Gospel. Now see the reason of it. The things of the Law are naturally written in our hearts, at least in part; so that they
are

are familiar, and intelligible to us, as domestick : Besides, they are conformable to naturall Reason, which is the noblest faculty of man. But the matters of Faith, which Nature knows not, and which come from far, and which are transmitted by another way then that of humane Reason, are strangers to our understandings; so that they are not received with so much welcome.

Thence it comes to passe, that so many souls are found out of their element, when one speaks to them of some mystery on which they never thought. The Law (truly) and ordinary Tenents ought to be preached; but it is a brutish ingratitude, under that pretence, to refuse to learn the secrets whereof the goodnesse of God vouchsafeth to make us an overture. I will not here stand to examine the common saying, which I have elsewhere observed, amongst those of the Vulgars, *viz.* That the Doctrine of Works is the principall
C 3 in

in Religion. They that say so, know not the importance of what they say. For the Doctrine of the Mercy of God, of the Redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, and of his other saving Works, is that less considerable then that which treats of mens works, or is the Law more then the Gospel?

Of Repentance and Obedience.

Wherefore is it never said that God repented him of any thing, saving that which concern'd men?

ACcording to the Scripture terms, which wee ought to take in a sense that derogateth not from the Divine Wisdome, we finde, among divers passages which touch this matter, three things whereof God repented:

pented : First, That hee had made man, *Gen. 6. 6.* Secondly, That he had chose *Saul King*, *1 Sam. 15. 11.* Thirdly, That he had pronounced the ruine of *Ninive*, *Jonah 3. 10.* But why is it never said, That God repented that he had made the Angels which became Divels ? Hath he not as much cause to be sorry that he gave them being ? Or why likewise did he never repent that he had made the Serpent, which served for an instrument to the imposture of that wicked Spirit ?

The Scripture never attributes any repentance to God, but when he is to deal about man. The reason of it is, that by this expreffion he might bring man to repentance. Repentance (to speak properly) is not at all in God ; but God attributes it to himself, to shew that it ought to be in man. *Jerem. 18. 8.* *If the Nation against whom I shall have spoken, turn from the evill it hath committed, I will also repent me of the evill that I thought to*

do unto it. Amongst the creatures, onely man is capable of Repentance; that's the reason it is never said, God repents, except when there is somewhat about man.

Wherefore hath God commanded divers things contrary unto common Principles.

We finde, that God hath given commandments contrary to cleanness, contrary to shamefac'dnesse, contrary to humanitie, contrary to nature, to all appearance, and common sense.

Against cleannesse, he commanded *Ezekiel* to seeth his bread with mans excrements, *Ezek.* 4. 12. Against shame, he ordained circumcision, and honoured it with the name of his covenant. Against humanity, he would have all the young children in *Fericho* massacred. Against nature, hee gave order to *Abraham* to turn out of doors

doors his son *Ishmael*. Against all appearance of a cause, he made an Ark to be built, therein to shut *Noah* and the creatures, which with more likelihood he might have lodg'd upon some mountain. Against common sense, a Prophet following the word of the Lord, said unto another man, Smite mee : This man refusing to smite him, is condemned to be slain by a Lion, and that for not obeying the word of the Lord, 1 *King*. 20. 35, 36. a strange command, and which seemed rather to come from the mouth of a mad man, then from the wisdom of God.

But why hath God commanded things that seem so absurd ? To let us understand, that there is a principle more high and more noble then our common reason, then ordinary decency, then humanity, then nature it self. All that we call just, beseeming, humane, reasonable, bears not this name but in respect of God, which hath given it to it, and hath there imprint-

imprinted his mark : And when it pleaseth him, he can give the same titles, and in effect the same qualities, to actions that have a name quite contrary. Then that which was impure, shamefull, ridiculous, cruel, and unreasonable, becomes holy, venerable, full of reason and justice. Moreover, by such commands, God hath been pleased to shew, that he would be obeyed, not so much for the goodnesse or splendor of the action, as for the authority of him that enjoined it.

A Question touching David and Solomon accepting the choice that God gave them.

To the one God gave leave to chuse such a judgement as he liked, out of the three that he propounded him : To the other hee gave the choice of such a favour as he would ask. Both accepted of the offer. One chose the Pestilence, the other made
his

his choice of Wisdom. But it seems, they had done better to have permitted the choice to God himself onely out of respect, and to have entreated him to send them what hee thought fittest for them : So one would have thought. But it is not permitted us to disobey out of modestie. If God commands mee to chuse, he will that I look to it that I chuse well. Wherefore then shall I frustrate his intention, in deluding his Ordinance.

Why is Superstition in things indifferent, held so hainous ?

He that out of conscience abstains from that which is not forbidden, or enthrals himself to that which is left unto his liberty, seems not to offend but through obedience ; is this then so great a crime ?

I let alone the wrong this Superstition doth to God ; but otherwise it sins against nature. There are actions

ctions to which God hath made man subject; there are also actions that God hath made subject to man: those we call Necessary, these Indifferent. Now when man makes his conscience subject unto those very things that are subject unto him, by such a disorder he degrades himself, and abandons the rank in the which God and Nature hath placed him. How are they to blame then, that teach the making scruple almost of every thing? that put thorns every where? that frighten consciences with apparitions and vain scarcrows? that fetter and load them with a thousand unprofitable burthens.

Touching the TABLES of the LAW in generall.

A comparing of the two miraculous Writings that are reported in the holy Historie.

THESE two Writings that were made without the hand of man, are, first that which God form'd upon the Tables of stone, containing the Decalogue. Afterward, that which he drew upon the wall of the Hall of *Balishazzar*, expressing the approaching ruine of that Monarchie, *Dan. 5.* The one was made presently after the People of Israels going forth out of the Egyptian bondage: the other, upon the time that they were to go forth of the Babylonish Captivity. It is notable, that the Babylonians had caused the first Writing to be lost,
then

then when the Temple was burnt, where were the Tables of the Law kept in the Ark. But for that afterward they lifted up themselves against the Authour of this Writing, God made them see another, that contain'd the decree of their ruine, *Dan.* 5. 23, 24.

How long the Tables of the Law endured, and a Consideration upon that matter.

I ask not what is become of that precious Writing, whose characters were the handy work of God. These Tables were never seen after the burning of the first Temple, in the which it is believed that they perished, as well as the Ark in which they were inclosed.

Now, from the time that they were given by *Moses*, untill that time they ceased (that is to say, the destruction of the Temple) pass'd nine hundred yeers, and something above: Certain Chronologers reckon therein
 nine

nine hundred and six : others, nine hundred and fifteen : others, nine hundred twenty seven : others go to nine hundred and thirty. Whereupon we may note, that according to the exactest supputations, the durance of the Tables of the Law past not the number of *Adams* yeers, who having first received the Law written in the tables of his heart, lived the age of nine hundred and thirty yeers. At the least it is certain, and seems very worthy of note, That neither the durance of the Tables of the Law, nor the life of any man have never attained the age of a thousand yeers. The Law said, Whosoever fulfilled it, should live for ever : but for want of fulfilling it, the life of man never reach'd a thousand yeers. And God in like manner would not that the Tables wherein he had renewed this Law that offer'd life, should last a thousand yeers.

The reason why the Scripture shews which is the greatest Commandement, and never which is the least.

Although there be a difference of degrees & weight between the Commandements; and that the Law-giver hath mark'd that which is the chiefest, yea and the second likewise, to which all the other are referred; yet would hee never say which was the least of them all, in the one or other Table. His will is, (notwithstanding the inequality which is betwixt them) that we consider them all as great, seeing that in the Law there is nothing that is not great in effect. Besides, it is necessary to know which is the greatest Commandement in each of the two Tables, because all the other are (as it were) in chaff'd into the greater: But to know which is the least, is in no wise necessary.

How one may judge of two diverse Commandements, to know which is greater then the other.

Those that concern God, and touch him nearest, or that render man most like God, those are the greatest. Greater (for example) is that Commandment which immediately respects the service of God, then that which hath other ends, although subordinate : So *Mary* had chosen the better part. Greater is the spirituall service of God then the externall ; because it hath more correspondence with God, who is a Spirit. Charity is greater then Faith or Hope ; because Love is in God, yea God himself is Love ; but neither Faith nor Hope can be in him : For what should God either beleieve or hope for ? Greater is his work that saves a mans life, then his that buries him dead ; because the living bears the image of God. Upon this last example

I will make a Digression, yet not far from the matter.

Why by the Law it was pollution to touch the dead corps of a godly man that had been murdered, and neverthelesse it was not pollution to touch the living Murderer.

We know, that whosoever touched a dead body (even for to bury it) the Law declared him defiled. So a godly man being slain, all that touched him after his death, fell into this ceremoniall irregularity. But if they touched the murtherer, though his hands as yet all gored in his bloud, they endangered no uncleannesse. This Law is strange, and it seems hard to finde a reason of it. We may answer notwithstanding, That as there were divers causes of pollution, that of a dead mans body proceeded from that he had lost the image of God, the lineaments of which consist properly in the soul. Now a living man, though

a murtherer, carries notwithstanding, in regard of the substance of his reasonable soul, this image, which the dead man hath no longer.

The Preface of the Decalogue.

Hearken, Israel, &c.

Degrees amongst Nations, in regard of the love or hate that God bare to them.

TWO Nations have of old been famous for two contrary reasons. One, as being the most beloved of God, to wit, *Israel*: the other, the most hated, viz. *Amalek*.

Amongst the people that God held in hatred, the Idumean and Egyptian were lesse hated then the Moabite and Ammonite, and these lesse then the Amalekite. The Idumean and Egyptian were excluded the Congregation

gation of the Lord to the third generation : the Moabite and Ammonite entered not in thither till the tenth : the Amalekite was not onely shut out thence for ever, but also condemned to be totally rooted out from under heaven. 'Tis that onely Nation against whom God hath denounced immortall War; that alone that ever he commanded wholly to suppress. The causes of the difference that God put between these infidel people, are touched in *Deuteronomie*, chap. 23. v.1. &c. and 25.v.17, &c.

Wherefore is Nathaneel called an Israelite, or childe of Israel, rather then the childe of Jacob, Joh.1.47.

'Tis known, that *Israel* and *Jacob* was but the same man, and that his Posterity are sometimes called the children of *Jacob*, and sometime of *Israel* : Not that it is indifferent to call them by the one or the other name. For there be reasons and circumstances.

cumstances, for which they ought to be called rather by the one then the other name. But passing over what the Learned have heretofore observed therupon, I have one observation to produce hence.

The high Prophet speaking of *Nathaneel*, saith, that hee was verily an Israelite in whom there was no guile. This man then is praised as sincere, and that knew not what it was to circumvent any man : In this quality he was none of *Jacob's* childe, that had supplanted his brother, stealing away his blessing by a false supposition. •*Jacob* had sometime been fraudulent ; but *Israel* was always sound. For being as yet but *Jacob*, he deceives both brother and father too : but after he was honoured with the name of *Israel*, his actions were ever without deceit. On good reason then the name of *Israelite* is rather given to *Nathaneel*, then the name of a childe of *Jacob*. And here, as through the whole Scripture is seen the admirable

stile of the Divine Wisdom, to whom only it belongs to appropriate names unto their true natures.

God never works a Miracle to witnesse or prove that which a man may know naturally. But why then did he cause so many Miracles to intervene at the publication of the Law, seeing it is naturally known to men ?

God doth nothing superfluous : that's the reason he never raised up Prophet, or sent Angel to foretell Eclipses, or other events that may be foreseen by ordinary wayes. Was it necessary then that God should come down from heaven to earth, with such a miraculous demonstration of his glory, to come tell men, that they must honour Father and Mother ? to give them to understand that they must not kill, nor bear false witnesse ?

I forbear to say, that this Law that
was

was published in *Sinai*, contains points which a man cannot understand but by supernaturall revelation ; for we had never known how many dayes God bestowed in creating the whole Universe, if himself had not revealed this secret, which he expresseth in the fourth Commandment of the Decalogue : Yea moreover, what the Law carries in its very frontispiece, (*I am the Lord thy God*) could not be known by any naturall means.

To clear this, we must again remember, that God never names himself the God of those he hates. The revelation comprehended in these words (*I am thy God*) is an expression of benevolence and graciousnesse : Now this his saving benevolence could not be known by any voyce of Nature. We say further, that here are two points to be distinguished : one, that there is a God ; the other, that he is our God. The first, that there is a God, is written naturally

in our hearts : which is the reason that never yet Angel descended from heaven to come and tell men that there is a God. But to make them know that God is their God, to ensure them of his loving-kindnesse, to bring them injunctions from him; and in brief, to attest and confirm that which they could not learn from any naturall principle, God hath wrought miracles, hath caused Angels to speak, yea hath spoke himself.

The I. COMMANDMENT.

*Thou shalt have no other
gods , &c.*

A consideration of the times wherein Atheisme and Superstition have generally reigned.

TWO crimes are forbidden in this first Commandment of the Law : One, not to have a God ; the other, to have more then one. These two sins are very ancient in the world : yet it seems that Atheisme was the first, or at least Profaneness, which comes very near to Atheisme. We read not, that before the Flood there was any Idolatry amongst men : The holy History (*Gen. 6.*) marking out the cause of their destruction, seems rather to accuse them for having had
no

no God at all, then for having had many. After the Flood, though Atheisme was on foot itill in the world, yet was Idolatry far more generall. But as the corruption of mankinde began by Atheisme or Profanenefs, it makes as though it would return thither again. The first Ages have been Atheists, the following ages Idolaters, and the last, into which we are fallen, is already wholly disposed unto Atheisme. And when the Son of man comes, he shall not finde faith upon the earth.

By the example of the Pharisees and Sadduces, is shewed, that God rather pardons the Superstitious, then the Profane.

The Pharisee was superstitious, but the Sadduce inclined to Atheism, seeing that he beleaved not the immortality of the soul, neither the resurrection of the body, nor the life to come. Now we finde, that divers Phari-

Pharisees (notwithstanding the envie and ill will with which they were fore-stalled) became capable of the Faith, and received the Gospel. One of the most eminent of this Sect, *viz.* *Nicodemus*, spent both his cost and his pains in the buriall of Christ. But never read wee of any Sadduce that was converted to Christianity. Not that God hath been wanting either in goodness or power to their conversion: but (as it seems) he would have it seen, that (in disdaining to make them his Disciples) he more detesteth the profane, then the superstitious. Such a Pharisee that had even persecuted the Church, was promoted as high as unto an Apostleship: But never any Sadduce came so much as to the quality of a Disciple.

The true Religion, the easiest. The folly of the Pagans affecting plurality of gods.

False Religions have a thousand
objects,

objects, a thousand troublesome windings, and every of them trails the minde of man now into one danger, by and by into another. But true Religion hath but one God, one Mediator, one Sacrifice expiatorie, one justifying Faith, one Baptisme, one mysticall Body, and one onely Spirit. How much the more we multiply this Union, so much the lesse have we of Religion.

But the poor Pagans took it clean contrary; for they that had the greatest number of gods, counted themselves most religious. It was the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans to seek all the gods they heard tell of, yea all they could imagine; thinking, that to have many gods, was to have much Religion.

*A consideration upon the Worship
of Angels.*

The most specious and fair seeming Idolatry was the adoration of Angels,

gels, creatures so noble, and so far above us. These celestiall spirits have sometimes come and spoke to men; but their communication was ever short; they did, as it were, but passe by, without ever permitting any to know them. Now it seems, that the Wisdom of God would that every of their apparitions should be but of small continuance, not to give time to the curiosity and feebleness of man, that inclines to Superstition, to ask them questions from the matter, or to idolatrize their presence. Of all mortall men that the Angels have longest held in discourse at one time, Saint *John* the Divine was He; who suffered himself to be carried away with an excesse of submission toward them, *Avocalyps* 19. 22. And since that time, Angels have forbore to speak and commune with men.

Touching a kinde of Idolatry very subtile and ushall.

Many common people say, that
they

they put their confidence in the true Religion, in their prayers, and in the justice of their cause, which is the same with Gods own. It will seem to them very strange, if one tell them that they deceive themselves ; and that one must trust neither in Religion, although true ; nor in any of its duties ; neither in our just right, though God himself be concern'd in it.

But they ought to consider, that we cannot nor ought not to put our confidence but in God alone. Religion is not God : Religion is the service that one renders to God, but it is not God. Even the very Ark of God that held the Tables of the Law, is called the might of God, and his glory ; and yet it sufficeth, that it was taken, and carried about in triumph by his enemies, *Psal. 78. 61*. Our faith is not rested upon a quality that God giveth unto a Cause, nor in the interest that he takes in it ; but it is fastened and stayed on God himself, who is
its

its proper object. This distinction, that many will judge unprofitable, and of little solidity, is notwithstanding necessary : and for want of taking heed to it, we fall into an imperceivable Idolatry, and which is very common.

Wherefore is it, that a man that hath false gods, leaves them not so easily, as another forsaketh the true ?

The Israelites were sometimes less constant in the service of the true God, then the Pagans in the worship of their Idols. This is cast in their teeth, *Jerem. chap. 2. Go thorow the Isles of Kittim, and behold, &c. is there any Nation that hath changed their gods, which notwithstanding are not gods ? But my people hath changed their glory into that which is nothing worth.*

This is natural, and an effect of the weaknesse of humane judgment. Naturall men desire to have a god that may have some proportion with them-

themselves, and who may not be too far above the reach of their understanding: Thence it comes, that if a man will make choice of a deity, he will rather chuse any God then the true. The true God is infinitely exalted above us; and between his nature and ours there is an immeasurable distance. But all other Deity that a man can imagine to himself, is found fitted unto mans capacity, and within some kenning; which is the reason that he the more easily fasteneth upon it, more willingly sets up his rest there, and more hardly forgoes it. And on the other side, it is more difficult for him to adhere to a God that is so far both from our senses and understandings.

The. II. C O M M A N D M E N T.

*Thou shalt not make to thy self
any graven image, &c.*

*Who is more wicked, he that adds to the Or-
dinances of God, or he that detracts
from them?*

ALl the corruptions that happen
in Religion come by one of these
wayes; viz. either of addition, or
substraction: Both are noted and
censured within the perclose of the
Bible, *Apo. 22. 18, 19.* Notwithstand-
ing, it seems that one is more dange-
rous and abominable then the other:
One leads to Superstition, the other
to Atheisme. Hee that adds to the
rules God hath prescribed, becomes
superstitious; and hee that takes
thence, becoms a Libertine. One loads
E himself

himself with superfluous burdens; the other shakes off the necessary yolk that God had imposed upon him. Now if a man takes away once one point of Religion, and takes away yet another, and continues always taking away, at the end no Religion is left him: So that we see that these cuttings off and diminutions end at length in Atheisme, which is far worse then Superstition.

These two Sects, so famous in the History of the New Testament, *viz.* Pharisaisme and Sadduceisme, lodged in these two extremities: The Pharisee sewed his Traditions to the Scripture, and annexed to it an infinite of ordinances. The Sadduce suppressed a main part of the Scripture, yea all the Prophets except *Moses*: he annull'd the Resurrection of the dead, denyed the being of Angels and all Spirits, and in divers manners mangled the Religion, turning it almost into Atheisme.

Sometime it falls out that the
Scri-

Scripture is gelded in favour of Superstition; the Church of *Rome* takes out of the Decalogue this second Commandment, or confounds it with the first, or withdraws it from the eyes and ears of the people.

Of the nature of painting that represents the Historie of the Bible.

There are many things are more clearly set forth in a picture then in a discourse. The fabrick of the Tabernacle, the architecture of the Temple; the dimensions, stories, and divers rooms of *Noahs* Ark, are more perceptible by us in a painting to the eye, then is the verbal description the Scripture gives us of it. A man verily may behold the situation and length of the Land of *Canaan* better in a Chorographick Map, then in the History of *Josuah* :

But that which is the more evident and easie, is not neverthelesse the more excellent. These paintings are

not divine, as are the words of the Scripture. A visible representation of *Solomon's* Temple is meerly a humane figure; but the verball representation of the same Temple exhibited in Scripture terms is a divine work. The picture of a man crucified, is it as divine as the words of the Scripture describing the passion of Christ? or rather, is it comparable to a Sermon, in which Jesus Christ is drawn out before our eyes, and crucified among us? *Gal. 3. 1.* Where is it authorized by God to plant Faith in our hearts? In many narrations a picture verily may serve for an help to the understanding of the Historie: but it can never be either instrument or object of our Faith.

None ever made any image of God, except God himself.

There is none but God can make the image of God: Only man, among all the visible creatures, is this Image:
but

but hee cannot shape it in another matter; no, not in another man. A Father doth not so much as propagate it to his children: for though they also bear this image, yet they receive it not from him, but immediately from God, who alone imprints in them his resemblance. The Scripture marks out this distinction, where it saith, that God made man after the likenesse of God: but that *Adam* begat *Seth* after his own likenesse, *Gen.* 5.1,3. Man bringeth forth his children after the image of man; but God onely fashions them to the image of God. So the Soul, in which properly consists the lines and lineaments of this divine Image, is not the work of man.

Why was it that God, who often appeared in a visible shape, would not manifest himself after this manner when he published the Law?

He caused himself to be seen by the

Ancients of Israel, and under his feet there was (as it were) a paved work of Saphir stone, *Exod.* 24. 10. He appeared unto *Daniel* in the shape of an old man, *Dan.* 7. He manifested himself yet other times in a visible shape. But when hee came down to pronounce the Law, although he gave many illustrious tokens of his presence, yet would he not appear in the figure of man, or do any other thing which might seem to represent him. Why not then, as well as in his other occurrences?

The Wisdome of God held it not fit to manifest himself under any resemblance then, when he forbad to make any resemblance of himself: For seeing he never permitted his representation (no not in the shapes like to those he had appeared under) it was not to the purpose to let one be seen then, when he forbade himself to be represented under any. If he had appeared in any visible form, one might have thought, that it was
law.

lawfull to represent him, at least in the shape he shewed himself in then, seeing that it was at the publishing of the Law, which was given to learn men what they should do. God himself tels us why in this action he forbore to be seen after the sort that he had manifested himself in other revelations; *Deut. 4. 11, 15, 16. Ye heard a Voice speaking, but ye saw not any likeness, &c. Yee have not seen any likeness in the day that the Lord spake unto thee in Horeb out of the middle of the fire; for fear thou shouldest corrupt thy self, and shouldest make thee any carved image or resemblance, which may represent any thing unto thee, &c.*

If wee had the true pourtrait and very resemblance of our Saviour Christ, taken from his own body; what account ought we to make of it?

Had I such a picture, I would keep it as most precious, not onely above

all other painting; but as one of the most worthy objects of mans sight: But I would ever make more account of the least Christian then of such a Picture: For a Christian represents Christ a great deal better then any paint. A true humane body animated not onely with a reasonable soul, but also with the spirit of Christ, doth it not more resemble Christ then a dead Crucifix, or a shape that expresseth nothing but some superficial lineaments? I say more; That if one would abuse this Picture, and idolatrize it, I would do by it as *Hezekiah* did by the brazen Serpent, 2 *Kings* 18.14.

A notable difference betwixt one of the figures which represented Christ, and those that represented the Angels. And a consideration upon the matter.

In the Old Testament Christ was figured by the image of a Serpent set upon a pole, without the Tabernacle,
in

in an open place : But the Angels were figured by the faces of men, having wings, placed over the Ark it self, in the most holy of Holies. If we consider these figures, and their placing, that of Christs was greatly inferiour unto that of the Angels : And if the true image of Christ did consist in outward lineaments, an humane shape had been fitter there then that of a Serpent.

Whence is it, that in the Apocalyps, Iesus Christ (being man) is decyphered onely in parabollicall Figures, rather then in the naturall form of his own body ?

We see him appear with seven Stars in his right hand, and a two-edged Sword going forth of his mouth : We see him clad with a robe dipt in blood, and mounted upon a white horse : Wee see him in the shape of a Lamb slain, having seven eyes and seven horns. But we never see

see him there, or in any other place of the holy History, in the figure of his own naturall visage : To teach us, That we ought rather to seek him in the description of his graces, then in the Idea of the feature of his visage.

What's the reason, that amongst all the wonders that God hath wrought, he never made an Image to speak ?

God hath shewed forth an infinite of Miracles of all sorts, but never did he cause an Image to speak. There were Cherubins within the Tabernacle, and in the Temple, and God caused his voice to be heard from under the mercy-seat, over which these Statues were placed ; but wee read not that ever they spake word. The Son of God likewise never wrought any such miracle, nor his Disciples. God (without doubt) would not that men should have this pretence to colour their Idolatry. For if any image
had

had spoken, they had easily beleevved that there had been some divine vertue inclosed in such a statue. And that's the reason the Diuel did that which God would not : for he hath often spake in divers Idols, the bet-to oblige men to consult with, and serve them. In the 13 of the *Revelat. vers. 15.* this Mystery is counted amongst those that the second beast wrought , that he made an Image speak. Besides, although God should have made any speak, (as many suppose) yet should it be no more adorable then *Balaams Ass*, if it were again in the world.

Two sorts of sinners at which God mocks.

All sinners are worthy of Gods anger ; but there are two are worthy of derision, as well as his indignation : One is the proud ; the other, the Idolater : and we read, that God mocks at both. At the proud ; *Psalm 2. Hee that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them,*

them, the Lord shall have them in derision. Esa. 14. he jeers the King of Babylon, whose pride began to be followed with ruine. It seems also, that God mock'd at the pretensions of our great Grand-father, when he said, *See, Man is become as one of us.* He mocks likewise at the Idolaters, Superstitious, and those that resort to Wizzards. So said he to the Israelites, whom he had chastened for their Idolatries, *Cry to the gods ye have chosen, that they may deliver you,* Judg. 10. 14. Jer. 2. 28. So the Prophet *Elijah* laughing at the Prophets of *Baal*, bid them cry very loud, that that Idol might hear them.

The admirable proportions that God holds in the dispensation of his judgements.

Here is a point marvellous dark, and a matter whose bottom it is impossible to sound. Our understanding cannot conceive why God chasteneth one more than another; why with

with such a kinde of punishment ; why sooner or later ; why in such measure ; why so long time, or so short ; and other reasons of such diversities as therein are marked. Yet this Sovereign Wisdom doth nothing that is not perfectly regular, although his operations seem to us so out of order.

Sometime God looks to the nature and quality of the crime. When we are in affliction, it is not enough for us to know or say in generall, that it is fallen upon us for our sins : There are alwayes certain misdeeds amongst others, that are the particular cause of such and such judgements. So the Nations that God threatned by *Amos*, *Chapt. 1. & 2.* were guilty of many enormous sins ; but there was one amongst the rest in every of them for which they were condemned. *Damascus*, for having broken *Galaad* with harrows of iron : *Gaza* and *Tyre*, for having deliverd over the Jews into Captivity : *Edom*, for having pursued
his

his Brother with the sword : *Moab*, for having burned the bones of the King of *Edom*, &c.

Sometimes God marks them that give the first example of evill, and handles them more harshly : So *Fericho*, because it was the first Town that shut the gates against Israel, was exposed unto unmercifulness : So *Amalek*, for being the first that made war upon the people of God, was condemned to a finall destruction : So *Nadab* and *Abihu*, because they were the first breakers of the Ceremoniall Law, after the establishment of *Aarons* Priesthood, were devoured by fire : So *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, the first that belied God in the beginnings of the Christian Church, were miraculously punished.

Sometimes God hath regard unto the number of sins ; seldome doth he punish a man, or a people for one fault : When he adjudged the Israelites, from twenty yeers old and upward, to die all in the wildernesse, that

that was by reason of a tenth Nationall sin that they had committed ; for God already complained that they had tempted him ten times, *Numb. 14. v. 22.*

Sometimes God looks to the continuance and measure of sins, and forbears to punish them til they be come to a certain growth : He would not put *Abraham* into the possession of the promised Land, because that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full, *Gen. 15. 16.*

Sometime God hath an eye to some circumstance that concerns the crime : For the forty dayes that the Israelites had imployed to discover the Land of *Canaan*, they were condemned to an exile of forty yeers in the Desert, in detestation of their murmuring, *Numb. 14. 34.* For having neglected the Sabbath of the Land, which they ought to have let rest once every seven yeers, they were captives out of their Land seventy yeers, *2 Chron. 36. 21.* King *Hozias*,
for

for having presumed to enter into the holy place, and there taking upon him to execute the Office which appertained not but to the Priests, was stricken with a disease, the judgment whereof belonged onely unto the Priests, *viz.* a Leprosie: and was driven not onely out of the Temple, but out of the society of men.

Sometime God imployes one evill doer to punish another, that hath committed the like offence. There is even a secret analogie and convenience in such judgements. The Serpent had inticed man to despise the fruits that God had given him, and had drawn him to covet one that God had forbidden him. The Israelites despise the Manna, the ordinary food that God had given them, and coveted the fruits of *Egypt*, that God had taken from them. Their sin, like that of the Serpent, was punished by the biting of serpents that were sent against them, *Numb.* 21. 5, 6.

Sometime God practiseth the law
of

of retaliation, or otherwayes he sends punishments answering the form or nature of the crime; we have an example in *Admibezek*, *Jud. 1. 7.* and infinite more both in *Scripture* and experience.

Sometimes God looks upon the number of offenders, and of just men, and on the proportions which he findes between the offences of the one, and vertues of the other: had there been ten just men in *Sodom*, it had not been destroyed.

Sometimes sinners are handled according to the measure of knowledge they have received; by this rule judgement begins at the house of God, and *Jerosalem* was destroyed before the *Pagan Nations*. *1 Pet. 4. 17. Ier. 25. 18. &c.*

Sometimes God looks upon the persons of our Ancestors from whom he takes occasion to punish the children, chiefly when they fil up the measure of their Fathers, *Mal. 23. 32.*

Finally, though God punisheth sinners, yet he punisheth them not alwayes for their sins, but sometimes for other causes, *Iohn 9.2,3.*

Of whom are descended those Nations that go aked?

It is known there be many Nations among whom nakedness is accounted no disgrace, a great part of the Inhabitants of *Affric*, and the Natives of the *West-Indies* walk without any other covering then their skins, and it is remarkable that the people there, (at least the *Affricans*) are come of *Cham*, one of *Noahs* three Sons. For the History of *Genesis* chap. 10. describing the peopling of the World shortly after the Flood, makes it appear that the Posterity of *Cham* did for the most part settle themselves in *Egypt*, *Lybia*, and other neighbouring Countries, whence doubtless they spread themselves through all the continents

ment of *Affric*, and the adjoining Islands, and at last moved Westward: the brutish behaviour that is found at this day among these Nations, void of all shame, seems to have continued among them as a mark of their Grand-fathers impudence, who discovered his fathers nakedness: *Gen. 9. 22.* and this is wonderful, that after so many ages, such multitudes of people do yet express the turpitude of an Ancestor removed so many degrees.

The number of Generations named in this Promise.

Many brethren are accounted but for one Generation, because they are all within one degree of descent; so the 12. sons of *Iacob* together were but one Generation, and which is remarkable the 12th. born after the deluge: for in the Genealogy of Gods people we finde after *Arphaxad* (the first that was born from the Flood)

12. Generations, till the 12. sons of *Jacob*: to wit. 1. *Arphaxad*. 2. *Scela*. 3. *Heber*. 4. *Peleg*. 5. *Rebu*. 6. *Serug*. 7. *Nacor*. 8. *Thera*. 9. *Abraham*. 10. *Isaac*. 11. *Jacob*. 12. the twelve Patriarchs. viz. *Rubin*, *Simeon*, &c.

Now taking the Generations in this sense, and reckoning them for so many degrees, we finde, that from the Creation till this present time, there have not been a thousand Generations as yet; and indeed it is impossible there should have been so many: For though every man that hath been since the Creation, should have been a father at the age of ten years, in a continual succession, yet there cannot be six hundred Generations, compleat seeing the World hath not lasted six thousand years as yet: but indeed the number of Generations since *Adam* is far from a thousand. *Jesus Christ*, who was born a little before the four thousand year of the World, was but the seventy fift Generation from *Adam*

Adam ; as may be seen in his Genealogy ; *Luke 3. 23, &c.* by all which we may judge that the race from *Adam* will never reach till the thousand Generation ; or else the World must necessarily continue longer then hitherto it hath done, which is against all probability.

But why then is it that God promiseth to shew mercy unto the thousand Generation, seeing that hath not yet been, nor (likely) shall ever be ? The meaning is, that though the race of the faithful should extend it self to the thousand Generation, yet Gods mercies would extend it self as far.

Strange Examples of divers Subjects, in which God hath manifested both his Mercy and Justice.

God hath shew in both these attributes of his joyntly, and yet severally, at the same time, and in the same respect. They have been displayed

played in heaven in *Adams* Family, in the Ark; in *Abrahams* Tent; in that of *Isaac*; in the Kingdom of *Israel*; among the Apostles; and in the punishment of evil doers in every one of these places God hath manifested notable examples, both of his justice and mercy: in heaven the good Angels were elected, and the evil spirits driven thence; In *Adams* Family, we have *Abel* and *Cain*; God regarded the Oblation of the one, and rejected that of the other; in *Noahs* Family we have *Shem* and *Cham*, the one is blessed, the other accursed; in the house of *Abraham* we finde *Isaac* and *Ishmael*; *Gal.* 4. the one the child of promise, the other after the flesh; in that of *Isaac* we have *Jacob* and *Esau*, the one beloved of God, the other hated of him; among the Kings of *Israel* there are *David* and *Saul*; the one according to Gods heart, the other rejected by God; among the Apostles *St. Peter* and *Judas*; the one was received

received into mercy, the other perished in despair; on the very Cross the two thieves, that were crucified with Christ, one of them obtained grace, the other died in impenitence; the like we read in the Parable of the Publican and Pharisee in the Temple, the one returning to his house justified, the other was left in his pride; so in the last day two shall be in the same bed, the one shall be received, and the other shall be forsaken.

Why did God sometimes take such particular care of the Patriarchs and their children, even of those that were wicked, and at this day he makes no such addresses as he did then to them?

Surely the same affection that was in *Hagar*, when she thought her son would die, may be in divers other mothers, to whom notwithstanding God will send no Angels to

assure their childrens lives, or their
 future prosperity; *Gen. 21. 15. &c.* ma-
 ny women also may be paired with
Rebecca, when they carry twins as she
 did, and yet God will not send them
 an Oracle to let them know what
 shall befall their children, *Gen. 25.*
22. Now among divers reasons of
 this extraordinary care which God
 had towards these persons we must
 know, that in them were compre-
 hended whole Nations, which *Re-*
becca bore in her womb; *Gen. 25. 23.*
 we must not think it then strange,
 for God to testify a particular care
 of those whom he had appointed to
 be the fathers of Nations: Besides,
 those twins must be considered in a-
 nother quality, to wit, as God
 would make them examples and
 types of the great mystery of Electi-
 on and reprobation, as the Apostle
 sheweth, *Rom. 9. v. 10. &c.* So *Hagar*
 and *Ismael* were marked by the hand
 of God to be figures of another
 Mystery handled by the same Apo-
 stle,

file, Gal. 4. 24. the nativity and conditions of these persons, and most of the actions which seemed contemptible and ridiculous, were full of mysteries, for which cause God did extraordinarily preserve and guide them.

Why God spent but six daies in Creating the World, and employ'd seven to overthrow the walls of Jerico ?

This City which was the first the *Israelites* took in after their passing over *Jordan*, was delivered to them without stroke. The walls whereof were beaten down, not by Engines, nor overthrown by springing of Mines, but onely by the presence of the Ark of God, accompanied with seven Priests sounding Trumpets of Rams horns, and compassing the City, by which means the whole walls fell down : But this procession continued seven daies ; for first they went about *Jerico* for the space of

of six daies, every day once; after this on the seventh day the Town was encompassed seven times; and at the seventh time, when the horns sounded, and the people gave a shout for joy, the whole circuit of the walls fell down, so that the Town was wholly dismantled, *Ioshua 6.*

Now among the most remarkable passages of this overthrow, it may be wondered, why God, who in a moment with the breath of his mouth can beat down the strongest rampiers and fortifications, would imploy so many daies, and so long a train of reiterated formalities, before the demolition of this place: and withall why this was not done till the seventh day, whereas the whole world was finished in the space of six daies. Must there be more time to destroy one Town, then to make the Universe? Surely in this example, as in infinite more, God would shew that his hand is slower

flower in demolishing, then in establishing in defacing the least of his work, then in forming the greatest thereof : and so that his justice reacheth no farther then the third or fourth Generation, whereas his mercy is extended to the thousand Generation.

The

The I I. COMMANDMENT.

*Thou shalt not take the Name of
the Lord, &c.*

*Why God pronounceth the same word
twice to the same purpose, against idle
oathes ?*

VEE finde that when God speaks to man he sometimes doubleth his words. In mens speeches those repetitions serve only to make the discourse more emphatical, or to make a greater impression on the minde and memory of the hearer : but in Gods language they are of another importance ; when God uttereth one and the same speech twice, as it were with one continued threed, he sheweth it is irrevocable, and no waies to be

be altered. We know that sometimes God hath repealed, and annihilated his declaratory sentences, as that which was uttered against *Ninive*, which he threatned after 40. daies to destroy, yet he spared her a long time after this: but when God uttereth a speech twice together, he never revokes it: The *Psalmist* willing to express the immutable stability of an Oracle: saith: *God hath spoken twice, I have heard the same twice*, Psal. 62. 12. that miraculous writing containing the ruine of *Babylone* and his Kingdom, began with *Mene, Mene, it is numbred, it is numbred*; as if it would say, the reckoning is perfected, nothing remains to be accounted for, *Dan. 5. 25.* We read also that sometimes God having expressed the same thing, by two different representations; this doubling thereof did signifie that the decree was irrevocable, *Pharaoh's* two distinct dreams were but one thing in substance; for

for the Kine in the one, and the Ears of corn in the other, did signifie the same thing, notwithstanding this repetition of the same matter, although expressed under different figures, made *Joseph* say, that whereas the dream was doubled twice, the thing was established by God. *Gen.* 41. 32.

Now it seems that Christ hath touched the same Mystery, when he commands that our speech should be yea, yea, nay, nay, *Mat.* 5. 37. as if he would injoyn us to be content with a double affirmation, or a double negation, in lieu of superfluous oaths, as being sufficient to express the stability of our speeches, after the example of Almighty God, who never repeals what he hath twice pronounced together.

Although

Although in some things God hath dispensed with his law, yet he hath never dispensed with faith; also of the stability of Gods oathes.

Against the General Law, God commanded *Abraham* to kill his own son, against the same Law God authorised the *Israelites* to retain the jewels and Garments which they borrowed of the *Egyptians*, *Exod.* 12. 35, 36. but he never commanded or permitted, either to speak or believe a falshood, chiefly in Religion, the Commandments which forbid him are undispensible, and these frauds which they call pious, are the more Criminal; for there is no thing more repugnant to Religion, then to support her with lies, as it is also a horrid thing to violate faith under the shadow of faith, that is to say of Religion.

In brief, if any hath power and authority to dispence with an oath,
surely

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surely it is God, but this he never did, for when he swares a thing, he never revokes it : The Lord hath sworn and will not repent : if there God never dispense with an oath, why should any man dare to take upon him this power of dispensation either in himself or towards others.

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The IV. COMMANDMENT.

*Remember the Sabbath
day, &c.*

*Why God never wrought any miracle on
the Sabbath day, before the coming
of Christ.*

THE Old Testament is full of
Miracles, divers whereof were
done among the Patriarchs in Egypt,
in the desert, in the land of Israel,
and even in the Captivity of Baby-
lon; yet we do not read, that any
of them were wrought upon the
Sabbath day: but on the contrary
we finde that the miracle of the
Manna which lasted forty years, was
interrupted and suspended every
Sabbath; for the food which fell the
six first daies of the week ceased on
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the seventh, so that upon that day this miracle failed : It is true, that the consequences and effects of a miracle hath sometimes passed on the Sabbath ; as the fastings of *Moses* and *Eliab* which lasted forty daies, in which time there were many Sabbaths ; but this long abstinence, was onely the effect of a supernatural vertue which God had bestowed on them ; now this gift in which consisted the miracle, was not found to be given on the Sabbath day ; otherwise in all probability, the sacred History would not have omitted this circumstance in brief, 'tis impossible to shew, that under the Old Testament any miracle hath been wrought on the Sabbath day, whereas the new Testament observeth that this day was famous for many miracles. If *Moses*, or *Eliab*, or any of the Prophets had done any miracle upon the Sabbath, the Pharisees had not so boldly condemned the Son of God for

for violating the Sabbath, seeing he wrought miracles on that day; and he had not failed in this point to have produced examples, if there had been any; but he indeed was the first that ever did any miracle on the Sabbath.

This then that seemed to serve as a pretext for their reproof of Christ, was rather a means to oblige them to admire him so much the more; for this was an extraordinary miracle, and a marke of dignity far surpassing that of all the Prophets, by making that to be seen which none of them ever did; viz. To produce miracles on the Sabbath day; In a word, this was one of the prerogatives which God had reserved for his Son, and one of the works by which God would have it known, that he was Lord of the Sabbath, *Mat. 12. 8.* To this I will add the ensuing observation.

Seven Sabbath daies which Christ honored by his miracles.

I will not speak of that which is known to all ; namely , that without reckoning the Sabbath of every seventh day, there were besides seven daies yearly, in divers seasons, on which all servile work was forbid by the Law, these were the first and last of the feast of unleavened bread, that of the first fruits, that of the feast of Trumpets, the first and eighth of the feast of Tabernacles, and that of Expiation : all these universary daies are mentioned in the 23. chapters of *Leviticus* ; we know also that in the feasts of Easter and Pentecost there were seven daies of rest.

But as the actions and sufferings of Christ are the perfection of all those things which are contained in the Old Testament, this seems to me worthy of admiration, that
among

among the Sabbath daies which our Saviour honoured whilest he converted in this world, the History of the Gospel hath marked out seven, which Christ made famous by miracles; I will set them down according to the order of time, in which they fell out.

The first of these seven daies of Sabbath was sanctified by the cure of a Demoniac, of St. *Peter's* mother in law, and of some other infirm persons, *Mat. 1. 21. Luke 4. 31.*

The second by a wonderful cure of the Paralytic, who had been diseased thirty eight years, *Joh. 5.*

The third by the healing of him who had a withered hand, *Luke 6. 6.*

The fourth by the curing of divers sick persons, notwithstanding the incredulity of the Galileans, *Mark 6. 1.*

The fifth by an unheard of miracle til then; a man born blind, who received his sight, *Joh. 9.*

The sixth by another strange miracle of a woman that was bowed downward eighteen years, and cured of this infirmity, *Luke 13.10.*

The seventh by the cure of an Hydropic, *Luke 14.1.*

So in Christ we have the accomplishment of the Sabbath, sanctified by those actions, which before were never seen upon that day.

In what things our Saviour is to be imitated.

God doth binde us to the observation of the Sabbath by his own example, because he rested himself on that day : but must we immitate God in all his actions ; there be vertues in him which we cannot immitate without sin or madness : to immitate his power, were not a vertue, but an insufferable pride, as that of *Salmonius*, or the King of *Tyre*, *Ezek.28.2.* They that endeavour to fast forty daies after the example

example of the Son of God, ought to consider that this fast was one of the effects of his power, which we ought to admire, for we cannot imitate it: and here let us observe, that among all the perfections in God, there is not any one of them proposed for our imitation, but his goodness; he never commanded us to follow his example, but in this one virtue; *Be ye holy, as I am holy; Be merciful, as your Heavenly Father is merciful; Be perfect (to wit, in goodness) as your Father is perfect, Lev. II. Luke 6. Matth. 5 and 6.* So the sanctification of the Sabbath consisteth chiefly in the action of goodness and holiness.

Whence it is that in the History of the New Testament, we do not read that ever the Sadduces appeared on the Sabbath day?

There is nothing more frequent in the Gospel, than the proceedings
 G 4 of

of the *Pharisees*, chiefly on the Sabbath daies: for on that day they are seen in the Temple, in the Synagogues, even in the fields, *Mat. 12. 1. 2.* on that day they are heard to censure the works of the Son of God; *John 9. 14. 15. Luke 6. 7.* On that day they visited and feasted each other. *Luke 14. 1, &c.* But for the *Sadduces* that other famous sect, the sacred History makes no mention of them, when it speaks of any thing that past on the Sabbath day; it relates what they spoke or did in many occurrences upon divers daies, but it never speaks of any appearance they made that day; so that although sometimes the *Pharisees* and *Sadduces* have been found together in the same place, yet this was never on the Sabbath; for we do not read that upon this day they ever met, nor that then the *Sadduces* disputed with Christ, or censured his actions, or that they came into the fields to calumniate them, as the

compatible with the Sabbath, which the *Pharisees* were wont to do ; and which is strange in the whole History of the Gospel, we do not find that the *Sadducees* were ever found in the Temple or Synagogues.

Now to know the reason hereof, we must presuppose, that which some have gathered out of the Rabbins, that the *Sadducees* held among other of their errors, this, that it was not lawful to go out of their houses on the Sabbath day into any place whatsoever : this opinion was grounded on a false exposition of that passage in the Law, which ordained that none should go out of his house on the seventh day, *Exod.* 16. 29. The *Sadducees* inferred upon this, that if any did but step out from the door of his house on that day, he broke the Sabbath : The *Pharisees* on the other side proved, that upon the 7th day, they were bound to repair to the Temple and Synagogues ; because God commanded

manded that on the Sabbath day the people should assemble together, *Levit. 23. 3.* Yet notwithstanding, the *Sadduces* upon that day would not go out of their houses; whence it is that in all the sacred Story, we do not finde that ever they shewed themselves on the Sabbath day.

In brief, under pretence of observing punctually the Sabbath, they profaned it impudently, in an irreligious idleness, and impious Hypocrisie.

Why the Law useth such an excellent subject. viz. God's Rest, as a reason for the beasts to rest?

The same reason why God will have man to rest on the seventh day, obligeth him to suffer his ox and his asse, and all his cattle to rest then: *viz.* because upon that day God rested; but why will Almighty God bring his own example, as a reason for the rest of beasts, a subject so mean?

mean ? Indeed humanity may induce us to give rest to the poor beasts that travel for us ; but doeth this base subject of the beasts rest, deserve so noble and excellent a reason, as the rest of God himself ?

We must observe here, one thread of the Lawgivers wisdom. The Law of God contains many points, which would be contemptible, because of their meanness, if there were not some provision against this: now to prevent this slighting of them, God hath authorised them by the highest reasons that can be, by the severest comminations against those that infringe them, and by the richest promises to those that observe them : this is the reason why such grievous punishments are set down against him that shall taste leavened bread within the seven daies of Easter ; this is the reason why that he who findes a birds nest must content himself with the young ones, and let the dam fly away,

away, hath the promise of length of daies, which is the same that is annexed to one of the great Commandments of the Law, for those who honour their Father and Mother, *Dent. 22. 6, 7.* This is the reason why God forbids the eating of the flesh of creeping things, and backs this prohibition with a reason taken from his own example, *Be ye holy, (as I am holy), Lev. 11. 44.* This is also the cause why he interposeth his own example, in commanding the rest of beasts, for this ordinance being made in the favor of so mean a subject, is the more considerable, in that it is annexed to such an high and excellent matter, to wit, the rest that God took after the Creation.

Why none of the dead have been raised on the Sabbath day?

In my observations on the Creed, upon the Articles of Christs Resurrection,

rection, I promised to handle this question : I must first then verifie the Hypothesis. I say that on the Sabbath day our Saviour cured many diseases, but never upon that day raised any that were dead, neither in the Old nor New Testament do we read of any such resuscitation upon that day. Not the Sunaimteson, that was raised by *Elisha*, for the History saith expressly, that it was not the Sabbath day, and the journey of *Elisha* and *Gebazi*, which they made, to raise the dead child, was against the rest of this day; 2 *Kings* 4. 23. &c. neither he who was laid in the grave of the same Prophet, nor the sons of the Widow of *Nain*, which were carrying to be buried, for they raised them there when they went to inter them: now the sanctity of the Sabbath debarred them from burying on that day, 2 *Kings* 13. 21. *Luke* 7. 15. Not *Lazarus* of *Bethany*, for when he was raised, many Jews were come to his grave,

grave, which the holiness of the Sabbath would not have permitted. Those pious women who had prepared spices to embalm our Saviour's body, being prevented by the Sabbath, rested all that day, and went not to the Sepulchre till the next morning, which was the 3rd day after his death: not that those were raised with Christ, and appeared in the holy City, for these miracles fell not out, till the day after the Sabbath: not the daughter of *Iairus*, nor *Tabitha*, for then they were raised, when their Friends were performing their Funeral Ceremonies for them: Now these actions, such as are the burying of their dead, the washing and embalming of them, yea, the entring into an house where a dead corps lay, all these were prohibited on the Sabbath, as being incompatible with its sanctity, *Matth.* 92. 3. & *Acts* 9. 37. Not the Widow of *Sarepta's* son, whose resurrection is men-

mentioned without naming the day, which had not been omitted, if it had been on the Sabbath; not *Eutychus*, who was raised by *St. Paul*, for this was on the first day of the week, the Sabbath being already past; and here it is remarkable, that this young man, the last of those that were raised, recovered life the same day that Christ returned from the dead. *viz.* on the *Sunday*.

Now why God never raised any on the Sabbath day, two reasons may be given.

The first is, because Christ himself, who is the first born among the dead, and the chief of those that were raised, was not resuscitated on the Sabbath, but he suffered this day to pass before he would come out of his grave; besides, (as I observed on the Creed) Christ was not raised on the Sabbath to shew the union between him and others that were raised, of all which, none received life this day.

The

The other reason may be this.
viz. This life is a time of travel,
and the Sabbath was the time of
rest, the wisdom of God would not
that on the day which was ordained
for the repose and rest of the living,
the dead should be taken from their
ease, and called back again to tra-
vel.

The

The V. COMMANDMENT.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c.

*Whence comes it as they say commonly,
That Love and Affection useth to de-
scend: Difference between Faith & Cha-
rity: The words of Mal. 4. 5. discussed.*

WE know why God the Law-
giver hath ordained the du-
ties of Children towards their Fa-
thers, but hath not exprest the
duty of Fathers towards their Chil-
dren; the reason is, because the af-
fections of Parents towards their
Children is naturally greater, and
needs fewer incitements then that
of Children towards their Parents;
this is the meaning of that common
saying; that the Parents affection
H de-

descends towards the Children, but the love of Children towards their Parents doth not so easily ascend.

Now we demand, how comes it that love rather descends then ascends? The reason is, because Love had its beginning in Heaven; God is the first that loved. I say Love had its original in Heaven, and came down into the Earth; and in this it differs from Faith, which had its beginning on Earth, and terminates in Heaven. By a secret instinct and natural affection, which is found in paternity, imitates that of God, which is Father of all, and who loved us before we loved him; as in affection the Father prevents the Child; so the Love of God towards us, doth infinitely surpass that which we bear towards him.

The Prophet in that passage which I quoted, speaking of the reuniting of disagreeing Families, saith, *That the heart of the Fathers shall be converted towards their Children, and the heart*
of

of the Children towards their Fathers.

In the order of these words, the conversion of the Father towards the Child proceeds the conversion of the Child towards the Father; for we must presuppose, that as the Paternal affection is the first and strongest, so the heart of the Father is more easily reconciled, and sooner appeased than that of the Child.

Why the Law expresseth the Childrens duty to Parents by the word Honour, rather than by the word Love.

Surely the Honour which is commanded to be rendred to them, doeth not exclude the Love which is due to them: But whereas unreasonable Creatures Love their little ones, and are beloved of them: The Lawgiver wills that this natural affection, which ought to be in Man, should be cloathed with a more noble quality, then that which

is found among beasts ; for these are capable of natural affections, but man alone is capable of Honour ; as well to give Honour, as to receive it.

Another reason why this Commandment speaks of Honour rather than of Love, in some regard a man owes more affection to his wife and children, then to his father and mother ; for he must forsake father and mother, and cleave to his wife ; but in matter of Honour, the Parents have alwaies the preheminance ; in our affections many times they have the second place, but in Honour and reverence they should still be first.

Wherefore the Law commanded Children to fear those that brought them into the world, namely, the Mother before the Father.

The Decalogue saith, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother ;* but in the 19. of

of *Leviticus* ver. 3. it is said that every one should fear his Mother and his Father ; here the Mother is first named : We must observe that in this passage the Law-giver speaks of the fear which the children should have towards those that are the Authors of their Generation. The love which they carry to the child, causes sometimes that he fears them not, therefore God commands him to fear them. Now because the Mother hath the greatest part of this natural affection towards the child, and consequently is less feared ; God hath inforced this obligation of the child towards the Mother, naming her first, before the Father in this commandment, which injoyneth to fear them both : So this duty towards the Mother, being more subject to be infringed, is made so much considerable, in that it is put in the first place.

The Promise annexed to the fift Commandment.

*Examples, of that proportion which is
found sometimes between good works,
and the recompence which they receive
in this life.*

IT is well known why God in this
Commandment, hath rather pro-
mised life, then any other blessing.
From our Parents we have received
our life, hence it is that life is pro-
mised to him, that shall Honour
those of whom he hath received it;
for as the punishment sometime an-
swers the offence, by the Law of
retaliation, even so many times God
remunerates a good work, by some
favour answering the same in some
similitude: So *Abraham* offered his
only son, and God promised him
thousands

thousands of children , *Gen.* 22. 16,
 17. So *Jacob*, who had fed *Joseph*
 by the space of seventeen yeers,
 was reciprocally fed by *Joseph* in *E-*
gypt the space of seventeen yeers :
 So *Abraham* and *Lot* for their Hospi-
 tality to men, had the honour to
 entertain Angels : So *Rachab* having
 preserved the Spies in her house,
 was her self preserved with her
 house : So the house of *Obed Edom*
 was blessed for having received the
 Ark of God : so *Ezechias* having rai-
 gned 14 years religiously, received
 from God an addition of fifteen
 years, a term longer then the for-
 mer : So *Daniel* and his fellowes re-
 fusing to defile themselves with the
 King of *Babylons* meat, though they
 were fed onely with pulse and wa-
 ter, yet they fared better then those
 that were fed with the Kings allow-
 ance : So she that was blamed for
 pouring out a precious ointment on
 our Saviours head, is praised at this
 day, where ever the Gospel is
 H 4 preached :

preached : So many for humbling themselves have been exalted. 'Tis true we finde not alwayes this proportion between the work and the reward : but though God doth not still pay in the same kind, yet he gives that which is equivalent, yea, infinitely better ; if he doth not bestow long life upon Earth, he gives that which is eternal in Heaven. Now why he gives to some a longer, to others a shorter life, there be other reasons. but secret, I will observe some example .

Why fifteen years were added to the life of Ezechias.

He that could see the particular causes why God abridges and prolongs our life till such a minute of time, will finde the effects of a marvellous dispensation. The number of the years of the Patriarchs, and many others famous in the Old Testament, is full of such Mysteries.

take

take one which is notable. We know that God having caused the sentence of death to be pronounced against *Ezechias*, did notwithstanding add fifteen yeers to his life: The common sort, who see no farther then the superficies of the History, perceive not of what importance, this term of years was, which God bestowed on this Prince; this number of years was significative, and carrieth a meaning that reacheth far.

We must observe that a little before *Ezechias* sickness, the Kingdom of *Juda* was drawing towards its end; it had been invaded by the Assyrians, and as yet stood in aw of them; for this cause God promiseth to *Ezechias*, not onely the prolongation of his life, but also the continuance of his Kingdom; for at the same time that he assured his life for fifteen years, he added, that he would deliver him from the hands of the Assyrians, and would defend

Jerusalem

Jerusalem the capital City ; so the fifteen years that were promised to *Ezechias* did express also the continuance and establishment of his Kingdom.

We must observe then that *Ezechias* was the fifteenth King that raigned in *Judea*, in which the true religion was preserved ; for from *Saul*, who was the first King, till *Ezechias* inclusively are reckoned fifteen Kings of *Juda* ; to wit, 1. *Saul*. 2. *David*. 3. *Salomon*. 4. *Roboam*, who was forsaken by the twelve Tribes, and retained onely that of *Juda*, with a part of *Benjamin*. 5. *Abijs*. 6. *Afa*. 7. *Iosophat*. 8. *Ioram*. 9. *Achaziah*, otherwaies called *Hozias*, whom his mother *Atalia* followed, but because she usurped the Kingdom, her unlawful ragin is not counted among the true Kings. 10. *Ioas*. 11. *Amaziah*. 12. *Hazariah*. 13. *Iotham*. 14. *Achaz*. 15. *Ezechias*.

As then the raign of *Ezechias* was the fifteenth in order of succession,

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so God would give him fifteen years, including as it were in this epitome, all the former raigns, and recapitulating them by the like number of years in the fifteenth King; this was to confirm al together both the life and raign of *Ezechias*, both which having been upon the point of expiration ; so that the life of this Prince being prolonged fifteen years , was a pledge of the subsistence of that throne which had supported fifteen Kings.

The age of the Israelites when they passed out of the WilderNESS into the Land of Promise.

This I observe here as an Historical circumstance only. None of those who entered into *Canaan* after the death of *Moses*, had as yet attain'd the age of sixty years, except *Calib* and *Iosua*, whom God reserved as two ancient witnesses of the wonders he wrought in *Egypt*. This may be easily

easily verified ; for two years after the *Israelites* departure from *Egypt*, they were all condemned to die in the desert, except such as were then twenty yeers old and under, *Numb.* 14. 29, 30. since this sentence of condemnation there passed thirty eight years, in which the sentence was performed, and about the end of this tearm, the survivors entred *Canaan*; now if we add the twenty years of their life, when God uttered this sentence, to the thirty eight years of their wandering in the desert, it will appear that all those who entred the Land of *Canaan* under the conduct of *Caleb* and *Iosua* were under sixty yeers ; so that there was none who was decrepit with age.

The measure and proportion of mans life from time to time, since the first ages.

There are six degrees by which the life of man hath been altered since

since our first Parents.

First, before the Flood the number of mans years was at most nine hundred, or nine hundred and sixty, as we may see in *Iered* and *Methusala*, Gen. 5.

Secondly, After the Flood immediately, God altered the third part of that age, for *Sem* the most famous of *Noah's* Sons, lived in all but six hundred years.

Thirdly, In the first Generations of those who were born after the Flood, the life of man was abridged one moiety : for *Arphaxad*, *Scelas*, *Heber* lived but four hundred thirty eight, or four hundred sixty four years, whereas their first progenitors had lived twice as long.

Fourthly, this half was cut in two about the time of the Tower of *Babel*; so that mans life was abridged to the fourth part of the ordinary age of the first men : for *Peleg* who was born at that time lived 239. year, which was but the fourth

fourth part of the years of *Fered* and *Methusala*.

Fiftly, afterwards the life of man was yet much more shortned, and still declining through many generations, reached but to the eighth part of the age of our first Parents. This was in the time of *Moses*, who lived one hundred and twenty years, which is but the eighth part of nine hundred and sixty : By the way we may observe, that when God was to send the Flood, he gave to men but the term of one hundred and twenty years, which was the eighth part of the ordinary age of men in those times, to which it seems answers the number of eight persons saved in the Ark.

Sixtly and lastly, the life of man grew every day shorter and shorter, till it was reduced to the twelfth part of the first measure ; for eighty years, which is the age that few at this day do exceed, is but the twelfth part of nine hundred and sixty ;
which

(III)

which was then the ordinary age before the Flood, and that which was then, their youthful age, is now our greatest old age.

So then the life of man was first reduced to two thirds, then to the half, then to the fourth, then to the eighth part, and in the end to the twelfth.

None of the Kings of Juda exceeded the age of seventy years.

This is but an Historical observation, yet remarkable, that these very Kings which God had appointed over his people, have been all short lived: he that lived longest was *David*; he was thirty years old when he was set on his throne, and he reigned forty years and six months; so that he did not much exceed seventy years, but none of his successors from *Salomon* till *Zedechias*, did ever attain to that age; which may be easily proved by the sacred Chronology.

Differ

Difference between the faithful of the Old Testament, and those of the New, concerning their desire of long life : another difference about the reckoning of the years of their life.

Under the Old Testament many of the faithful desired long life, but since the coming of Christ, we do not read of any who have desired it : on the contrary, when Simeon had seen Christ the Lord, he was content to die : after that the Author of eternal life appeared, the faithful have not had such desire to stay long in this transitory life ; and so much the less, in that our Saviour did not sojourn long in this world, having continued but few years.

We may observe also, that the Old Testament speaking of many of the faithful, recites how many years they lived : but since the coming of our Lord, who conversed so short a time upon the Earth,

Earth, the sacred story makes no mention at all, of the total sum of any mans years in all the New Testament, the daughter of *Lairus* is the onely person whose age is observed when she died, but this was because she was restored again to life the same day, her departure having immediately followed upon her resurrection.

Three causes, why men are loath to leave this life, represented in him who died first.

The trouble that men have upon the apprehension of death, is increased upon the concurrence of these causes.

First, if one die young; for he hath more reason to desire life, then he who is full and satisfied with daies.

Secondly, if he die a violent death, for we are best content with that which is natural.

I

Thirdly,

Thirdly, if he die without issue; for death should be more supportable to those who survive themselves in the persons of their children.

Now that we may in good time learn, that neither the shortness of this life, nor violent death, nor want of posterity, should make our departure grievous to us, God would have these three accidents to meet in him, who was both a just man and the first that died, to wit, *Abel*.

For first, he died young in regard of the age of men in those daies.

Secondly, he dies a violent death; and which was most grievous, by the hand of his own brother.

Thirdly, he died without issue.

A moral observation upon the daies of Lazarus raised from the dead.

The number of daies makes not a long life; many who think they are alive, are dead in effect, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. the daies we pass in ignorance or in malice,

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malice, should be abated from the count of our years. The four daies of *LAZARUS* his abode among the dead; must not be reckoned among the daies of his life; and whereas he was raised again, he had reason to reckon from the day of his resurrection, rather then from the day of his nativity.

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The

The VI. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

*Why G.d in his titles doeth rather
call Himself our Buckler, then our
Sword.*

WHEN the Scripture expresseth Gods protection, opposing his arms to our enemies, it represents them rather defensive then offensive ; sometimes he is called the Rock and Tower of his people, sometimes also our Buckler ; this was the first title that God assumed to himself, after the first war we read was in the world, *Gen. 14.* for thus he vouchsafes to speak to *Abraham*, *I am thy Buckler* ; and afterward he hath been many times honoured by this title , in that he would

would be called the Buckler of his people ; but he would never be named their sword, but once, and after that he was named their Buckler, *Deut 33.29.* this is to shew that the children of God are not properly quarrellers, and if at any time they take arms, it is rather to defend then to hurt.

Since Moses there have been but three men, who received power to kill any miraculously ; and the same who have miraculously inflicted death on the living, have also given life to the dead. Reasons of the one and the other.

Among the miracles that God hath displayed by his servants, we read that sometimes they have put some persons to death, so *Elijah* made fire come down from heaven, which consumed two Companies of fifty men a peece, with their Captaines ; so *Elisha* caused Bears to come out of the Forrest, which tore

many of the Children of *Bethel*; so *St. Peter* by his word onely smote with death *Ananias* and *Sapphira*. These Executions could not be but just, being done by a supernatural power; notwithstanding God did not bestow this, but on very few; for since *Moses*, though many have had the gift of miracles, yet none have received this power of destroying men by miracles; but these three, *Elijah*, *Elisha*, and *St. Peter*; neither would God have those, in whom he had placed this miraculous power, to make use thereof but very seldom: therefore Christ did justly reprove the Apostles, who would have imitated this Act of *Elijah*, *Luke 9. 54, 55*. Moreover, those whom God had employed to inflict death upon some, he gave them power to bestow life upon others; as *Elijah* on the Widows son of *Sarepta*; *Elisha* on the *Shunammite's* son, and *St. Peter* on *Tabitha*, as being an Act more glorious to bestow life on
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the dead, then to take it from the living; he would also shew, that for the more full authorising of the calling of these great personages, they were employed as well to give life, as to destroy; otherwise, wicked men would have had some pretence in saying, that their God had power to kill the living, but not to restore the dead; which blasphemy was prevented by the wisdom of God.

The plot of the Priests in consulting to put Lazarus to death, Joh. 12. 10.

Murder is more or less enormous in divers respects, now though the example which I set down here be extraordinary, it will serve nevertheless to shew how far the furious spirit of murder extends it self. The son of God had raised one that was dead, the Priests endeavoured to bury this miracle, willing to send back to the grave a man that had

been thence taken out, this was to commit a double murder upon the same person ; as God had given twice life to *Lazarus*, (the one at his nativity, the other at his resurrection) so this was as it were to make him die twice, in taking from him the second life, which he had re-established in the first.

A question : If the punishment of a criminal being interrupted by some extraordinary accident intervening, after the execution is begun, is it just to discharge him, of the punishment to which he was condemned.

It hath hapned sometimes, that malefactors have fallen down from the Gibet upon the breaking of the rope, some have been taken down as dead, who yet have lived a good while after ; some upon the Scaffold have had divers blowes in the neck by the sword, and yet the head not cut off. *St. Ierom* in his Epistle to *Innocent* mentions a strange example ;

ple; and in the former age, one of our Martyrs being set upon the pile, where they thought to have burnt him alive, he died a natural and quiet death, before the fire was kindled.

But if it happen that a Malefactor who hath passed through all the sorts of a mortal execution should be yet found alive by some means not thought on, or foreseen by men; ought he be again exposed to punishment? The providence of God who hath rescued him, seems to have given him letters of pardon: Justice also which did not condemn him to die twice seems to have received the satisfaction, which it required of him, seeing he hath undergone, if not death it self, yet at least the impresson of death.

In this case, which may furnish matter for a fair debate, I distinguish thus: there be some crimes so enormous, that they deserve more deaths than one, if a man could die oftner

oftner then once; fo murtherers, forcerers, and others guilty of fuch hainous wickednefs, fhould be carried back again to punifhment, though they had been refcued by fome interruption which might feem miraculous; it is to be prefumed that the juftice of God, did ftay the courfe of execution to increafe rather the pain of death, then to remit the punifhment; but as for leffer faults, chiefly thofe which Gods law hath not declared capital, and yet are fuch by the civil law, as theft, it feems that the Malefactor hath fufficiently fuffered pain, if he hath tafted the half of death.

An allufion in the Apoftles words, who ordains that the Sun go not down upon our anger, Ephes. 4. 26.

The law commands that the Malefactors body put to death, be buried the fame day; it is exprefly forbid to let it hang all night on the Gallows,

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Gallows *Dent.* 21. 23. therefore as the Sun must not go down upon such a spectacle, though it be the body of a Malefactor justly punished by death, and whose punishment should serve for an example: Even so, our anger, though it proceed from a just resent of some injury done to us, yet it should never sleep with us; to this it seems the Apostles words do allude.

The

The VII. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

Why God though he approves not Poligamy nor unlawful divorces, which were frequent in the old Testament, yet never forbad them, but by the last of all the Prophets?

THE question is not why God tolerated these sins among the Israelites. We know that the hardness of their hearts, did as it were extort this licence, *Mat. 19. 8.* and for the same cause God did for a long time wink at this disorder, which was so common : For we do not read that he ever reprov'd any of those who had plurality of wives, or who put them away without just cause : onely in *Malachi 2.v. 14,* &c. He

He censureth their Poligamy, and unlawful divorces. But why this custome which had been allowed by so long silence, and prescription of so many ages, was condemned at last? Or why did he delay to censure this custome, till the last of the Prophets; for *Malachi* was the last of them all.

The purpose of God was, that the Kingdom of Christ should be famous; amongst other preheminences for its exact policy, far exceeding that which went before; for this end he suffered that of *Moses* to give way to some disorders, such as were Poligamy and Divorces, to make it known, that the government of Christ which cut off this tolleration, is more perfect then that of *Moses*: So that this politick Law of *Israel*, served to declare and advance that peece of holiness in Christ, and to shew the perfection of his government, then, when he came to suppress the abuse which that ancient
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indulgence had supported.

Now as the time of his coming, and of this reformation did approach, God would prepare the hearts of men: and whereas he was to put a period to the old Testament, and meant not to send any more Prophets, it was needful that the last of them should make this preparation: So as for Poligamy and unjust Divorces, God did not prohibit them sooner, untill the Common-wealth of *Moses*, which was to give a lustre to that of Christ, should have its period; and so likewise he would not put an end to the Old Testament until he had disposed men to that reformation, which was to follow the coming of the Messiah; for after God was manifest in the Flesh, men have been tied to a more exact purity; to this Christians are more bound, then the *Israhelites* or *Patriarchs* were.

Why men are more subject to be ashamed in the Act of any sin, rather then in that of pride; and why more in Luxury, then in any other sin?

There is no sin of which man is not ashamed in the act thereof, or whilst he is committing it. So many blush when they lie or steal, or when they shew themselves sordid and close fistd, or when they play the Gluttons, and so in any other vitious act, although there be none to witness it. Onely the proud man sins still without shame; never was shame found in the act of pride. The reason hereof is, because the glory which a proud man affects or presumes to have in any action, is formally repugnant to shame: For it is impossible a man should be ashamed of that, which he esteems tendeth to his glory.

As for the other question, we may say, that the more bestial a sin is,

is, it is the more subject to secret shame: for the sin that reduceth a man to beast-like conditions, seemeth to check him for the indignity and disgrace he offereth to himself: Now as venereal Luxury is the most brutish of all sins, so man is most naturally ashamed of it; as for such as have no shame, they are either innocents or beasts: innocency is in infants, bestiality in savages, and such as have lost their understanding, and in those also that are impudent in their turpitude, such as the *Cyniks* were.

What may be inferred upon this, that the Holy Ghost describing under divers similitudes the spiritual beauty of the Church, makes no mention of painting?

The ornaments of the Spouse are mystically represented in divers passages of Scripture, as *Psal.* 45. In the *Canticles*; In *Ezek.* 16. v. 10, 11, 12, 13. There she is set out in her chief apparel,

apparel, both in regard of the stuff, and the fashion. Silk, Gold, Silver, pretious Stones, Pendants from the eares, Chains, Bracelets, the Dressings, and all things which serve for advantaging a natural beauty, may be read among the ornaments of the Church : but painting which was invented for imbellishing of the face, is never named in any of those descriptions; it seems that God hath rejected this kind of disguise, in that he makes no mention of it among these ornaments which serve to represent the beauties of his Church : Yea, this artifice is reckoned among those of *Jesabel* onely, 2 King. 9.30.

A moral observation upon Sampson's losing of his strength and sight, and how he recovered the one, but not the other.

This strong man having betrayed the honour of his *Nazarites* professi-

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on,

on, the badg whereof consisted in his haire, lost this prodigious strength, which he kept till then, and so was overcome by the *Philistims*, who put out his eies; after some time that his hairs were grown again, his strength returned, but not his sight, for he died blind: It may be demanded why God would restore him to his strength which was supernatural, but not to his sight also. We might speak much upon this question, if here there were the place to handle what is literal in the History. But it will suffice to observe this onely. *Samsſons* eyes were the cause of his fall; for hitherto his unchast looks many times carried him into enormous faults, *Judg.* 16. 1. into which he might have fallen again, had he recovered his sight with his strength. Which strength was restored to him again, that he might once more chastise the *Philistims*, and that he might die with them: but his eies which might

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might have guided him out of prison, and conducted him hither and thither as before, and would have been yet ready, to make his heart wander again after lascivious objects, were not at all restored to him.

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The

The VIII. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

Why Christ used the example of thieves to induce us to search for the Kingdom of Heaven.

HE alledgeth him who having discovered a treasure in another mans ground, did not therewith acquaint the owner, but bought the field without giving him any share of his treasure, *Matth. 13. 44.* this is a thing disputable; but he proposeth also to us the open injustice of the Steward who coufined his Lord; *Luke 16. 1, &c.* and after his example he exhorts to provide for our salvation. Now we know well that these similitudes tend only to recommend wisdom to us; but
not

not to approve of injustice : But I ask, is there no other wisdom but that of the thief, which might serve us for an example to walk to heaven by ? chiefly seeing there are so many lawful actions among men, which wisdom might use for examples, without alledging these which countenance injustice ?

The intention of our Saviour in these similitudes, is to shew, that to attain heaven we must have a singular care, and use extraordinary industry ; the greatness of this spiritual wisdom, could not shew it self more, then by the actions of the greatest prudence, which can be found in the children of this world. Now among men there is commonly more prudence, spirit, and vivacity, and in a higher degree to be found in unlawful actions, then in those which are either good, or indifferent : this is by reason that lawful actions consist alwaies in a certain rectitude, whereas others

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are full of obliquity which requires more nimbleness and dexterity. Now whereas this sinful prudence makes use of all sorts of means lawful and unlawful, in a more spacious field, where it can extend, and put it self into all postures, more then the wisdom of good men can, which is shut up within the bounds of vertue, by reason man is naturally more ingenious to evil; but above all things, if we would see examples of extraordinary and transcendent subtilties, we shall finde them among theeves; we know there is nothing more inventive, then one given to this vice; for many will rob with such dexterity, that the admiration they make by their industry, surmounts the dislike we should have of there iniquity; therefore the Scripture makes use of that subiect, in which it findes most worldly subtilty, to make us see how great the prudence of good men should be.

An observation upon this, that among Christ's Disciples, there is but one noted for avarice, but all are taxed for ambition.

Onely *Iudas* is markt out by name, and by his acts of covetousness, *Iohn* 12.6. but all the rest are shewed to be ambitious; for many times they strove for superiority, *Luke* 9.46. even at that time when their Master was waiting for his own death, *Luke* 22.24. two of them made jealousy among all the rest, when they demanded to sit the one at Christs right hand, the other at his left.

It seems that as yet ambition was more universal then avarice; for although both these are rooted in the hearts of all men, yet the one hath a more general command then the other: so ambition is more ancient then avarice; for sin began at *Adam's* ambition; and in Scripture we read of many examples of am-

ambition, which appeared in the first ages of the world, before we finde any examples of avarice.

In brief, though both these be crimes, yet of the two avarice is the most unbeseeming man.

*To one man onely God by divine means did
shew the way to become rich*

It is God who still giveth riches, and the lawful means to become rich. It is he also that giveth industry, but yet he doth not furnish us with these, except by humane and natural means, which are understanding, diligence, experience, and other qualities; he never used extraordinary revelations for men to enrich themselves, except to one man onely: this was *Jacob*, to whom God sent an Angel expressly from Heaven, to bestow on him the invention to make himself rich, *Gen.* 31. 10, 11, 12. This is the onely example in all the Scripture; except
we

we will add that of the *Israelites*, to whom God shewed the means to enrich themselves by the *Egyptian* jewels, *Exod.* 12. 35, 36.

Now it is a thing remarkable, that God hath not been sparing of his oracles, when there hath been question about providing for the necessities of his servants, or for giving them advice of things requisite to their preservation, but to shew them the way to enrich themselves, his revelations in this point have been very rare; which notwithstanding in other cases he hath not been sparing of, as when he provides for the security of his children; so he forbid *Laban* to wrong *Jacob*; or for their honour, so he adviseth *Abimelech* not to meddle with *Abraham's* Wife; or for their quietness, so many times he comforteth *Jacob* in his afflictions; or for confirming and encouraging them in their vocations; so sometimes he hath spoken to *Moses*, *For-*
shua,

Shua, Gedeon, and others; or for giving them victory over their enemies, he shewed the way to the *Israelites* how to surprise *Hai*; & to *David*, how he might entrap the *Philistims*; or for preventing some inconvenience, so he adviseth *Isaac*, not to go down into *Egypt*; and on the contrary he gave order to *Joseph* the Husband of *Mary* the Virgin, to carry Christ thither, that was newly born, to avoid the fury of *Herod*. But to teach men by oracle how to enrich themselves, God never used, except one time onely, and for a special cause. So the Saints have sometimes desired revelations in case of necessity, but never for superfluity.

A conjecture upon the Jewish opinion touching the just price of things vendible.

The *Rabbins* teach, that he who sells a Commodity in gross, ought not

not to gain above the fifth part, that is to say, if the commodity hath cost five, he may sell it for six, and not above.

Now I know not upon what rule or example they ground this proportion; it may be they have taken it from that action of *Pharaoh*, who having purchased the property of all the Lands of *Egypt* contented himself with the fifth of their yearly rent, then when he made restitution to his subjects, *Gen. 47. 24.* it may be also, and with more probability, that they ground this upon that law which is contented, that he who unjustly detaines his neighbours goods, should restore them with the addition of the fifth part over and above, *Lev. 6. 5. Num. 5. 7.*

But these reasons are not concluding, to prescribe an universal price or tax; the justice of valuations consisteth not precisely in an Amount, but in a certain latitude, either more or less according, to circumstances. A

A Question: if he that hath made restitution of the goods unjustly detained, as also of all the profits and interests, and recompenced all the losses, hath he sufficiently discharged his conscience?

Zacheus was not content to restore fourfold for all that he had stoln, but also he bestowes on the poor the half of what remained of his goods lawfully gotten, *Luke 19. 8.* Now though this example doth not serve as a rule in all its measures, yet it is founded on a rule, in respect of its matter and substance.

He that hath done evil is bound by the law of true repentance, to do good also; but this is not properly to do good, when one repairs onely the evil which he hath done; he therefore that restores onely what is not his own, cannot be said by this action to hav don good to his neighbour; for after restitution of that

which

which he detained from another, he is bound also to give of his own where charity requires: the greatness also of his bounty must answer in some fit proportion, to the greatness of the robbery committed by him; for he that hath done much evil, is obliged to do also much good; not to pay the interest of Gods justice, which no man can satisfy, but to express the fruits of repentance, which cannot be sincere, if it endeavours not to exceed the greatness of the evil, by the greatness of the good. So he that hath restored all, hath not as yet cleared his conscience, because for detaining another mans goods, he must give some of his own, according to the greatness and extent of the evil he had done him. He that makes restitution of ill gotten goods remains yet charged with great obligations.

Sacrilege the first crime committed in the Church of Israel, after they entered into Canaan. And the first in the Christian Church.

To rob God is a more hainous sin, then to rob man ; yet it is held a thing indifferent even among those, who are conscientious in all other things : yea, many there are who think it a point of the true Religion, to suppress and annihilate all that their predecessors have consecrated to the service of God ; as though one could not be sufficiently reformed except he commit Sacrilege : this was the first sin that the *Israelites* perpetrated in the land of Promise, and in the first City they Conquered, to wit, in *Ierico*, *Ioshs* 7.1, &c. And this was also the first sin that appeared in the Christian Church, committed by *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Acts* 5. 1, &c. This fatal

sin of the Church hath been punished in both these beginnings, as well that of the *Israelites*, as that of the Christians, by miraculous and exemplary Judgments, to shew how excreable this crime is in the eyes of Almighty God.

The

The IX. COMMANDEMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness, &c.

Whether it be more injurious to call our neighbour fool, or knave? And why a man glorieth rather to be esteemed good than wise?

IT is not onely a reproach to ascribe wickedness to our neighbour, but also to accuse him of folly unjustly. Now which of these two kinds of calumniation be most criminal, is a disputable question: yet a man is more sensible, (chiefly he that is of any spirit) if he be called a fool, then a wicked man. For although that outwardly, & in regard of inconveniences, men are more troubled if they be called wicked,
yet

yet inwardly, and in their secret, thoughts, they are more offended, if they be reputed fools : The reason is, because every one naturally desireth to be thought a man, that is a reasonable creature, of which degree he thinks himself degraded, if he be taxed of folly, which is the want of judgment or reason, and indeed essentiall to man. So divine justice condemneth him to greater punishments, who calls his brother fool, then him that is angry without cause, *Mat. 5. 22.*

But then, how comes it, that no man (except he be a fool indeed) dare take upon him the title of wise; and yet every one dare call himself good, the cause also is plain ; for though every man beleeves himself to be reasonable, and is offended at the name of fool, yet he knows that the name of wise, includes qualities not common to all, and which are not in the power of every one, for to have a good natural understand-

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ding, a quick apprehension, a good judgment, are perfections which every one cannot have, though he would never so fain; but to be good, that is to hav moral goodnes, consisting in civil conversation only, there are none who think not themselves capable thereof: therefore, as every one beleeves he may be a good man if he will, so every one dares call himself good, and that boldly, because he knows that common belief gives him power to be so: but as for wisdom, which we know depends not on the will of any person, none dare so boldly and openly assume this title.

An Observation upon this; That in the Scripture God is oftner angry with mans wickedness, then he useth to laugh at their folly.

We may speak the truth ironical-ly, God himself useth sometimes
this

this figure, namely, then, when he mocks Idolaters, and such as trust in Soothsayers, he invites them to try if their gods and Astrologers can deliver them, *Judg. 10. 14. Ier. 8. 28. Isa. 47. 13.* and then also when he mocks those who trust to the wisdom or power of Kings, *Hos. 13. 10.* truly mans folly deserveth as much to be mocked, as his malice is worthy of our indignation: yet there is oftentimes more cause to be angry with the wickedness of the world, then to laugh at its vanity. So the Scripture sets out to us, how God is oftner angry with the wickedness of men, then he useth to laugh at their folly, and even then when he doth mock them, he is most incensed against them. *Psalms 2. 4, 5.*

*Is it lawful to divulge false news, if it
may serve for the publick good?*

For example, to appease a discontented people, or to encourage them when they are affraid; or to disperse a tumultuous conspiracy; or to divert the plots of an Enemy; Politicians make no scruple among other of their inventions to spread a false report, when they think it may produce some good effect: this seems to be countenanced by that of the Prophet *Elisba*, who led the *Syrians* into *Samaria*, making them beleieve, that he would conduct them elsewhere, 2 *Kings* 6. but to leave the opinions of Expositors upon that extraordinary example; the general rule of truth is still firm, for if it be not lawful to lie even for the glory of God, how much less for other causes; for is it reason that any estate, or weal publick

lick should be of greater consideration with us, then God himself.

Why it is lawful sometimes to make shew of evil, but never lawful to make shew of good.

There is great odds between a formal lie, and a simple fiction, or resemblance; for the one is altogether vitious, the other sometimes lawful, but with a distinction: We do not call him an Hypocrite who makes shew of evil, which he hath not, but him who makes shew of the good he hath not; the first is sometimes lawful, the other is never allowable; it is lawful for a good man to counterfeit the naughty man, as *Salomon* made shew to dispatch the poor infant, 1 *Kings* cap. 3. but it were counsage if a wicked man should counterfeit a good man; its lawful for a learned man to play the ignorant, but it were ridiculous

presumption in an ignorant to make shew of learning ; its lawful for a wise man to play the fool , as *David* did in the Court of *Achis*, but but its a transcendant folly for a fool to counterfeit the wise man ; its lawful for a milde man to make shew of rigour , as *Ioseph* did outwardly to his brethren, but there is nothing more detestable , then for a cruel man to make shew of mildness ; and lastly, it is lawful for a friend to counterfeit the enemy, but for an enemy to play the friend, is horrible treachery.

Counterfeiting therefore is lawful in the one, but not in the other ; good and evil in respect of their essence lodge within man, not according to outward appearance ; the inside may be good, though it doth not alwaies appear outwardly so, but the outside can never be good, if there be not goodness within : hence it is that sometimes good under the shape of evil is lawful, but evil

evil is never lawful under the shape of good.

We may know a wicked man; but it is impossible to know a good man.

If I finde a man doing wickedly, I am not deceived, if I hold him for a wicked man; but when a man doth all the good he can, yet this is no infallible mark to assure me that he is a good man; for many do good things, either out of Hypocrisie, or some interest; such will give all they have to the poor, yea, will suffer willingly Martyrdom, who notwithstanding are void of Charity, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. the works they do have truly a superficial goodness, but abusive, because the inside is naught. As true goodness then lodgeth within the heart, which to us is unknown, so we cannot know if such a man is truly good.

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But then how shall we know him to be wicked, seeing wickedness as well as goodness hath its abode within the heart ? The reason of this difference is plain ; an evil action never proceeds from a good heart, but an action that is outwardly good may proceed from an evil heart.

When the Scripture speaks of any man in Hell, it never names the man ; and when it doth name him, it never expresseth the name of Hell ; an observation upon this matter.

The Parable in St. Luke chap. 16. nameth him who is in Abraham's bosom, to wit, *Lazarus*, but gives no name to him that is in Hell ! Only in general, calls him a rich man. I will omit the reasons which some alledge for this, and will onely say, that the Scripture never nominates those whom it mentioneth to be in Hell

Hell torments; and for this cause it is, that the rich mans name is past over in silence, whereas *Lazarus* is called by his name; so it speaks of divers spirits in prison, *1 Pet. 3. 19.* that is to say, in Hell, but mentioneth none of them by name.

On the other side, when it names any that is dead in perdition, yet it never saith punctually, that he is in Hell; after *Judas* the Traitor had hanged himself, the Holy Ghost who inspired the Apostles, was not ignorant where the soul of that wicked wretch was; yet he saith nothing else, but that he was gone into his place, *Acts 1. 25.*

Now if God himself who knows the names of those which are in Hell, doth still forbear to utter them; how much more careful should we be, to refrain ourselves in our verdicts, when we speak of the state and condition of those who are dead; although that his
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end may in some sort induce us to judge sinistrouſly : How raſh then are they who dare inſert into a Catalogue the names of thoſe who are damned.

The

The X. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet, &c.

A sin committed by rule and order is more enormous, then that which is done in disorder and confusion.

A Sin that is committed with judgment, order, and formality, is so much the more detestible : He that kills in cold blood, at leisure, and with Ceremony, is more blamable, then he that kills rashly, and without formality : the reason is, because in the one, the understanding which is mans Counsellor acteth with complacency ; but in him who is transported with passion, it hath small power : as then man is not man without understanding, so it seems that he who offendeth

deth without the concurrence of the intellect, should not have his offence in so high a degree imputed to him : hence it is that we excuse mad men, when in their frantick fits they commit any outrage. Briefly, the more understanding there is in any crime, the more enormous it is, and a sin done orderly, is the more irregular.

The diversity of conflicts in man against himself.

That which I am to speak here is known sufficiently, touching the divers conflicts that be within man : but after the descriptions which have been given by divers, and will be material to reduce them into a brief summary ; now the chief combats we are to speak of, be these.

1. Between one Passion and another ; as sometimes fear is opposite to covetousness, and so one vice is en-

encountred by another, as ambition is sometimes restrained by avarice, or pleasure.

Between reason and the passions, as we have a thousand examples for this.

Between reason and natural sense; so some will be content to lose an arm for the preservation of the whole body; so *David* abstained from drinking the water of *Bethlem*, although he was pinched with great heat and thirst, 2 *Sam.* 23.16,17.

Between the conscience and the will, as oftentimes the one of these two resists the other.

Between the memory and the will, as sometimes we remember that which troubles us, and which we would willingly forget.

Between reason and reason it self, that is, one reason against another, as *St. Paul*, was inclosed on both sides, having causes which obliged him to desire a continuance of his

his life, and other reasons which made him willing to forsake the world, and to be dissolved, *Phil* 1. 22, &c.

Between sense and faith; as *David* having judged of things according to appearance, concluded that in vain he had wasted his heart; but faith made him retract his words, and use a language quite contrary, *Psal.* 73. 13, &c.

Between natural sense and godliness, as the Martyrs which naturally abhor death, yet they received it with much alacrity; and as our Saviour expressing this reluctance, faith to *St. Peter*, *They will lead thee whither thou wouldst not*, *John* 21. 18.

Between the conscience and faith; the one casts us down by setting our sins before us, the other raiseth us up, by the consideration of Gods mercy.

And lastly, between the flesh and the spirit; that is, between corrupted

ted nature and grace, which do strive against each other in all the faculties of the soul; as truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, purity and impurity. This, this is that intestine war, which sets at variance the understanding, will, and affections, and indeed the whole man against himself, *Rom. 7. 15, &c.*

Why some see more easily the defects of the memory, and of other faculties of the soul, then the defects of their judgment?

All unlawful desire presupposeth a corruption of judgment: if reason which is the eye of the soul were clear, all the other faculties would be pure, *Matthew 6. 22.* but its hard for man to know when his judgment destroys him, or when it is deceived; if our memory fail in any point, we presently take notice of this defect, and likewise if our affections

~~ctions be faulty~~ : but if our judgment miscarry, it is a hard matter to find it. The reason of this difference is, because it is with the judgment as with the eye, which seeth all things except it self; our judgment judgeth of the defects which be in the other faculties of the soul; this is it which seeth and discerneth them; but it seeth not its own defects, except by a kinde of reflection, which is very weak and feeble; so that it can with facility judge of the other powers and qualities which are with it in man, but it can hardly judge of it self; whence it comes that a fool seeth not his folly, though he seeth the other faults that are in him.

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
with all thy heart, &c.*

*The correspondency that is between the two
Tables of the Law.*

TH E first begins with the honour due to God, from whom we have our being.

The second begins at the honour due to our parentsⁱ, by whom God hath given us being.

The first forbids to make any image of God.

The second forbids to deface the image of God, that is, to kill men.

The first prohibits spiritual adultery, saying that God is jealous.

The second inhibits corporal adultery.

The first forbids to take Gods name in vain.

The second to bear false witness.

The first commands us to labour

fix daies, that we may live onely upon our own.

The second prohibits to take the goods of another.

The first commands a Sabbath or corporal rest for our selves, servants, and cattle.

The second commands a rest and contentment of spirit, forbidding us to covet our neighbours house, servants, and cattle.

And lastly, the scope of the first is that we love God :

Of the second that we love our neighbour.

All these correspondencies proceed from that which is between God and man ; whence arise those relations & resemblances which we finde between the Commandments of the first and second Tables.

There is love in God but not Faith and Hope.

Amongst the Prerogatives of love, above these other two ; the
Logical

Logical vertues, this is considerable, that God loveth, but he doth not beleeve nor hope ; for to beleeve is an act of Faith, which is of things unseen. But what is ther that God seeth not? and besides, what can be wanting to him, that he should stand in need of hope ; these two vertues are incompatible with an infinite perfection. This is then one of the preheminences of love, in that it is found in God ; yea, God himself is called *Love*, 1 *John* 4.16. and in this respect it is greater then Faith and Hope.

Whether it is a greater defect, to want Faith or Charity?

This question depends upon another, *viz.* which of these two is the most difficult, to wit Faith or Charity ? For though both the one and the other be the gifts of God, yet the one may be more hard and difficult to us, then the other.

Now though these two vertues are still together, (seeing it is impossible for the one to be without the other) yet they are not alwaies equal, and in the same degree; the more common act of these two is charity; for we see more examples of love then of faith: many Christians love God earnestly, who notwithstanding have much difficulty to assure themselves of his promises.

One cause that makes the motions of love, more easie then those of faith is, for that the objects of love are more intelligible and perceptible to our understanding; for love hath for its object the goodness of God, but faith hath for its object, his truth: now it is more easie for us to conceive that God is good, then to understand how he is true, in all points which appear not to us; and yet we are commanded to beleieve. As then the motion of faith is more difficult then that of love; so he

that

that wants the acts of charity is more blameable, then he who is deficient in the acts of faith.

In all the History of that time which was before the law, the love of God was never mentioned in expresse termes, but onely the fear of God.

From the Creation till the Law, are reckoned twenty five thousand years, in which great interval of ages, were many Patriarchs, and other persons famous for piety; to whom God spake many times, and in divers manners. The sacred storie marks out their vertues, and names the fear of God, as the most excellent amongst them, but never expresseth their love towards God; its true, that this fear or reverence was not without a true divine love, yet they are distinct qualities; the one of which is named, but we never read of the other. *Abraham* being in *Palestin*, said, *That in that place the*

fear of God was not. Gen. 20. 11. *Jacob* swore by the fear of *Isaac* his father, that is to say, by the name of the same God whom *Isaac* feared, Gen. 31. 53. *Joseph* confessed he feared God, Gen. 42. 18. the midwives of *Egypt* are commended for fearing God, *Exodus* 1. 17. 21. In brief, before the Law was published, Religion and Piety was expressed by the name of *the Fear of God*, and not by that of *the Love of God*; and it is observable that the action of *Abraham* in offering his son for a burnt sacrifice, whereby he did so highly witness his love to God, this action, I say, is ascribed to his fear of God, without mentioning the love which he had shewed to him, *Genesis* 22. 12. the first time that ever the Scripture did express this phrase, of *the Love of God*, was after the repetition of the Law, *Deut.* 6. 5.

Now why the name of this great vertue was not uttered but after a long time, and frequent mention of
the

the fear of God? Seems to proceed from this, that among the perfections of God, the first which he manifested to man, (as I observed upon the Creed) was his power and greatness, *Romans* 1.20. So when our understanding desires to know what the Divinity is, by this word, it conceives a power eminent above all others: this is the first thought we have of this subject; whence it followeth, that the first impression it makes in man, after he hath begun to know God, is the fear which this supreme power gives to the soul; and because this fear is the first motive by which man is induced to submit himself to God; hence it is, that in the holy song, all religious affections have been comprised under the name of *the fear of God*; and for this cause this *Fear* was for a long time named, without mentioning expressly or particularly, *the Love of God*; but when the wisdom of God had gi-

ven large instructions under the Law, it afterward expressed the commandment of loving God, distinguishing the same Love from Fear, *Deuteronomy* 10. 12. What is it that the Lord thy God requireth, but that thou Fear him, and Love him.

*Of them who excuse their faults on this:
That God hath not given them more
understanding and judgement.*

These men willing to excuse themselves, accuse God, as if their faults were to be imputed to him: whereas on the contrary, the whole fault is in themselves; the Law wils that we love God with all our mind; thou alledgeth, thou hast but little minde; but how little soever it be, hast thou imployed it all in the service and love of God? Truly, there is no man that hath lived according to the measure and proportion of that understanding and judgment
God

God hath given him. In brief, if a fool excuse himself on this, that God hath not given him more understanding; a wicked man will excuse himself on this, that God hath not given him more goodness: for this is a gift of God, as well as understanding.

In the duties of man towards God, forgetfulness is more culpable then ignorance.

When we speak of divine things, many complain that they cannot retain them in their memory, the defect whereof they accuse; but they think not how forgetfulness is a sin, seeing the love of God requires a concurrence of all the faculties of our souls, among which memory is one: the defect of which is not a simple infirmity, as the vulgar people useth to qualifie it; but such a defect, as should be reckoned among the sins of omission, then
when

when it imports a remembrance of a considerable point, though it be not necessary, nor possible to retain all the syllables in which it hath been pronounced or written. As he who forgets God is more criminal, then he that never knew God; even so he who looseth a lesson which hath been taught him, is more culpable then he that never learned it.

Then

*Thou shalt love thy neighbour
as thy self.*

*Whence comes it, that contrary to all other
affections, this which man carries to
himself, hath no bounds; and why this
never faileth, nor is subject to diminu-
tion?*

In the affections we have towards
another, we feel and know even to
what degree we love him, more or
less; but no man can tell to what
hight he loves himself; for this love
hath no bounds but runs *in infinitum*.
Moreover the affection that one
bears to another, may be lessened or
interrupted, or quite annihilated, yet
turned into hatred; but the love he
bears to himself is never blotted out,
nor is it diminished, though never so
little.

Among

Among the reasons of this diversity, we may produce this : between every one of us and another , there are differences of proximity : our affections move within these intervals which have their measures and degrees. Now within these distances many causes of diversion or aversion may intervene , which intercept or turn aside the affections; but as there is no distance between a man and himself , even so the love which a man bears to himself , it immediately fastens to its object ; so that between the one and the other , there is no place that can admit the interposition of any contrary cause, the affection we bear to another moveth out of it self, but that which each man hath to himself , moveth as it were in a circle continually round about it self.

*Why the older we grow, the more we love
our selves?*

It is hard to beleeve that this natural love which every one bears to himself, and which is born with us can receive any increment, it is already great, and of a high stature, even when we are as yet in the Cradle: some will say then, that nothing can be added to such an affection, seeing it is so great in its very beginning: But on the other side, it seemeth that it increaseth still, and gathers strength and vigour, as man increaseth in years: in witness whereof, we may alledge that ordinarily a father doth more love those children which are born to him in his old age, then those he had before; as *Jacob* was more tender over *Benjamin*, then over the rest of his children: I know other reasons may be given for this increase of affection; but perhaps they

they proceed also from this cause :
 Though all the children of one father are his flesh and blood , yet notwithstanding the fathers affection towards himself being greater in his old age , then before ; this descends also in a greater measure, towards those children which he begets in that age.

But there is another probability that sheweth the increase of mens affections to themselves with the increase of their age ; as long familiarity increaseth the love that is between two persons ; so that man, that hath been long conversant with himself, & hath had long experience of his own fidelity , and confident in his own directions , hath reason to love himself more then before, seeing he was not then so well acquainted with himself.

Why we do not envy another mans goodness?

He that loves his neighbour as himself, will never envy him : for this vice is incompatible with love, 1 Cor. 13.4. It may be asked then, why men do envy the greatness, riches, knowledge, ingenuity, courage, and other qualities of their neighbours, but are never envious of their goodness, and piety ? for some will envy a man because he is in honor, or because he is rich, or valiant, or eloquent ; but they will never envy a man because he is good.

This proceeds from divers reasons, either from the small esteem that men have of goodness, in comparison of other things ; or from this, that every one perswades himself, that he can when he pleaseth be as good as another ; or from this, that goodness is so opposite
to

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to envy formally, that it cannot be
envies object, being so contrary to
it ; we cannot envy that in another,
which we cannot desire for our
selves.

Divers

Divers Duties of the Law.

A Conclusion of this Treatise.

Why Moses who wrought so great and many miracles, never raised any from the dead?

HE that turned the waters into blood, who made fire and storms fall upon *Egypt*, who divided the sea, and drew water out of the rocks; who wrought so many miracles upon all the Elements, yet never restored any dead to life. If one ask the reason, why this kinde of miracle was not found among these other supernatural acts, which made the Lawgiver so famous? It will be answered by som, that this question is either unanswerable or unprofitable, notwithstanding

standing it is considerable, and the solution is sufficiently clear : for this answereth the quality of the law, which was given by *Moses*.

The Law considered without Christ, is a letter that killeth ; and the ministry of *Moses*, is the ministry of death. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. his office was not to give life, but on the contrary to take it away ; in testimony of which, and to shew that the life and resurrection is to be sought for elsewhere, then in the Mosaical Law ; *Moses* never received power to raise any from the dead, although there wanted not occasions, which seemed to invite him to produce this miracle.

The Law continued from Moses, who had an impediment in his speech, till John the son of Zachary, which Zachary was speechless, Luk. 16. 16.

It were needless to speak of that again which is so well known, to wit,

wit, in what regard the Law was abolished, and in what respect it yet continues? The Oeconomy of the Old Testament, chiefly since *Moses* required the observation of the Law, as a means to obtain justice and life by, if men did fulfil it; and notwithstanding it made them understand, that by reason of their sins, the Law could not pronounce them just, being in this regard impotent, and having its mouth stopped, *Rom. 8. 3.*

This seems to have been mystically intimated, as well in the beginning, as towards the end of that legal Oeconomy; to introduce the Law, God made use of a man, who had an impediment in his speech; for when *Moses* was enjoined to go to *Pharaoh*, he excuseth himself, by reason of his defect of speech, *Exodus 4. 10.* And to signify the abolition of the Law, then when its time was almost expired, to make way for a more perfect Covenant,

nant, God made the legal Priests, dumb, who lost his speech in the very Temple, and at the time he should have pronounced the blessing on the people, *Luke* 1. 20, 21. 22. thus the Law as well at its entry, as at its departure, hath shewed, that it cannot bring us that great benefit of justification with a full mouth.

Why God in speaking to man, useth more words, then when he is represented speaking to the creatures which want understanding; and why he useth so many words and repetitions to effect mans conversation, seeing he can convert him, with one word onely.

God hath somtimes spoken, or caused speeches to be uttered to the creatures, which want either understanding or ears: He commanded the Sun and Moon to stand still, the Sea and Windes to be quiet, the Whale that it should disgorge

George Jonas, and the Feavers that they should be gone; to obtain obedience from them, he spoke to them but one word, and the effect was as ready as the command', for Heaven, Earth, Elements, Plants, and the beasts know the voice of their Sovereign Lord, and submit themselves to it without contradiction; but whereas man is naturally refractory, and opposeth himself to the will of God, he is not content to speak to him in few words what his pleasure is, but encourageth him with reasons, which he cleareth and inculcateth, and withal adjoyneth promises and menaces.

Surely God could effect by one word onely, that for which he useth such long remonstrances; he makes himself to be obeyed sometimes, in saying onely *fellow me*; but to make men know how far they are departed from him, and how difficult their conversion is; ordinarily he doth not make them draw nigh to

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him,

him, but by degrees slowly, and after many summons.

Why the Scripture speaking of Vertue and Vice, doth command or prohibit one oftner then another.

For Example ; it speaketh oftner against avarice, then against prodigality, though it condemneth both. So against excessive care oftner then against negligence ; and so likewise it oftner recommends to us liberality then frugality, though it mention both ; the reason is plain enough, because avarice is more general then prodigality ; and on the other side there be more frugal then liberal men : therefore the more common a vice is, the oftner it should be cryed down : on the contrary, a vertue which is found but seldom, ought to be the oftner recommended.

We could produce many other passages upon these Subjects of
Vertue

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Vertue and Vice ; but seeing we have undertaken onely these observations which concern the Decalogue in general, in each one of the Commandments ; I pass to these which I am to handle upon the Subject of Prayer.

FINIS.
